The Fact Divine

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THE FACT DIVINE.

AN HISTORICAL STUDY

OF THE

CHRISTIAN REVELATION

AND OF THE

CATHOLIC CHURCH.

By JOSEPH BROECKAERT, S. J.

Translated from the French by

EDMUND J. A. YOUNG.

Unus Dominus, Una Fides, Unum Baptisma.—Eph. iv. 5.

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APPROBATION OF THE BISHOP OF PORTLAND.

PORTLAND, Oct. 14th, 1884.

MR. EDMUND J. A. YOUNG,

Dear Sir: — I have just received the enclosed letter from Father Piccirillo, S. J., the prefect of studies at Woodstock College. It is worth keeping. It so highly commends the work and your translation of it, as published in the "Messenger of the Sacred Heart," that I can only add my hope that it may find a great number of readers. With best wishes for your success, I am yours truly in Christ,

✠ JAMES AUG. HEALY,
Bishop of Portland.

LETTER OF REV. CHARLES PICCIRILLO S. J.,

PREFECT OF STUDIES AT WOODSTOCK COLLEGE, MARYLAND.

WOODSTOCK COLLEGE, HOWARD CO.,
MARYLAND, Oct. 11th, 1884.

"The Fact Divine" is a short but excellent demonstration and explanation of Revelation addressed especially to young students. Without assuming a polemical form, it answers conclusively the latest objections against the Christian faith. This book was originally written in French by a Jesuit Father, printed many times there with the regular approbation of the Superiors of the Society and of the Bishops. I read the English translation inserted in the "Messenger of the Sacred Heart," and I found that not only is there nothing against faith and morals, but that it is a very instructive and edifying book. In faith of which, etc.,

FR. CHARLES PICCIRILLO, S. J.
Prefect of Studies.

Acc: 881

APPROBATION DE L'ARCHEVÊCHE DE MALINES.

IMPRIMATUR.

MECHLINIÆ, 3 Octobris, 1859.
J. B. VAN HEMEL, *Vic. Gen.*

TRANSLATION OF THE LETTER OF MGR. DE MONTPELLIER, BISHOP OF LIEGE, TO THE AUTHOR.

LIEGE, Sept. 30th, 1859.

REVEREND FATHER:

I thank you for having sent me the sheets of your work entitled: *Le Fait Divin*, etc. Your book is wisely conceived and executed with skill: this was to be expected from your long and intelligent experience in the training of youth and from your profound knowledge. To set forth all the grand events which pertain to the economy of the supernatural order, to show their authenticity, signification and connection, to do this is to make the clearest, the best conceived and the most useful demonstration of Revelation. That part of your work which treats of the Church, of her establishment, of her life, of her government, etc., exhibits in a clear, methodical and solid manner the knowledge with which youth should be imbued, in order to fortify them against the errors and prejudices which they will have to encounter upon their entrance into active life. Upon the questions and facts which the enemies of the Church distort most frequently, you give solid and exact notions and principles. Although your work is designed for the youth of the higher classes of colleges, I think that it will also be very useful to persons of more mature age, who desire to be thoroughly instructed in their religion.

Receive, Reverend Father, with my congratulations for your excellent work, the assurance of my highest esteem.

Your most humble and most obedient servant,

✠ THEODORE, *Bishop of Liege.*

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

In presenting to the public Father Broeckaert's work, *The Fact Divine*, in an English dress, the translator asks the indulgence of the critical reader on his labors. He has endeavored to give a faithful rendering of the author's ideas. If some passages are a little obscure, the fault belongs to the translator and not to the author.

Some may complain of the recurrence of Latin and Greek words and sentences in the book. These have been used sparingly, and only where they seemed to add to the force of the argument, and their translation nearly always accompanies them. Several foot notes in Latin have not been translated; these are not essential to the proper understanding of the text, and can easily be passed over by the general reader.

If the perusal of this book shall induce some of his fellow countrymen to return to the bosom of that Church which our Divine Saviour founded on a *Rock* and against which the gates of hell shall never prevail, the translator will be a thousand times rewarded for his undertaking.

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AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION.

CATHOLIC educators who realize their sublime mission cultivate letters and the profane sciences only for the purpose of giving a religious and virtuous training to the youth who are committed to their care.

In making profane learning subordinate to the *religious principle* in education, they by no means retard the progress of their pupils in literature and the sciences; on the contrary, they promote and stimulate their advancement by proposing a higher end, an end alone capable of elevating man above all natural aversion to improvement.

Christian education has for its object the knowledge of Religion as much as the practice of virtue: the noblest sentiments soon vanish if not sustained by solid instruction.

The necessity for religious instruction increases in proportion to our profane knowledge, and the development of our mental faculties. That instruction which is ample for the uncultivated mind of the laborer is far from being adequate to the trained intellect of the man of letters. A counterpoise is required against the seductive impulses of a proud and restless science: "*Knowledge puffeth up*,"[1] saith the apostle.

This necessity is particularly felt during those *epochs of insubordination of mind and will* when the

[1] 1 Cor. viii. 1.

human mind rejects all restraint, and in countries where an absolute liberty of opinion prevails. With the most superficial knowledge, often without any fixed principle whatever, every one assumes the right of deciding the most important questions, and in nothing is this temerity of imperfect knowledge more insolent than in religious questions: *they blaspheme whatever things they know not. Quæcunque ignorant blasphemant.*[1]

In order to be prepared for the incessant attacks directed against our holy religion, a young man should not be satisfied with learning his catechism exactly and obtaining precise notions upon all that a Christian should believe and practice;[2] he should fortify himself against the errors of the day, and be prepared to give a reason for his faith, according to the recommendation of St. Peter: *Being always ready to satisfy every one that asketh you a reason of that hope which is in you.*[3]

In order to satisfy himself concerning his Religion, the Christian does not cast aside his faith: he examines the proofs upon which his belief rests, not with a feeling of doubt, but with the satisfaction of a man who is assured of the validity of his titles of ownership and nobility. *It is the examination of a true believer.*

As the study of Religion does not suppose doubt,

[1] St. Jude i. 10.

[2] These notions should be acquired during the first years of education, but they are effaced and destroyed in a great number if they are not frequently renewed. We take the liberty of calling the attention of instructors to this important point.

[3] 1 Peter iii. 15.

it does not confer *faith.* By itself it produces in the mind only a human conviction which either disposes toward the faith those who have no faith, or confirms in the faith those who already possess it. Faith itself is a gift of God, of which the *supernatural* principle is divine grace, and the *formal* motive is the infallible veracity of God. By virtue of this principle and of this motive, faith is always superior to any purely natural certainty, not by a superiority of evidence, but by a superiority of adhesion.

Whoever desires to devote himself seriously to the study of Religion, should bring to it a *mind* free from prejudice and a heart disengaged from every bad passion. There are many, especially among the young men of the present day, who are skeptics in religion only because their heart is corrupt and because it is hard for them to believe what condemns their morals. "Truth," remarks St. Augustine, "has the same effect upon them that light has upon diseased eyes." "They prefer darkness to light," says St. John, "because their works are evil." Among the things that lead to infidelity, St. John Chrysostom mentions particularly libertinism and vainglory.[1] "It is true that the disorders of the mind become still more fatal and pernicious when joined to the depravity of the senses of which they are the consequence."[2]

To good *moral conduct* add prayer, in order that the unction of the Holy Ghost may enlighten the eyes of your heart. "But if any of you want wisdom," says St. James, "let him ask of God, who

[1] Hom. 72 in Matth. [2] Bossuet, *Or. Fun. d'Anne de Gonzague.*

giveth to all men abundantly, and upbraideth not: and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. . . . . Every best gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights."[1]

Beware of counting among true believers all those who render homage to Religion. At the present day the most decided infidels do not refuse to acknowledge the beneficent influence of Christianity upon society. The most dangerous poets have their religious moments, when (as they say) such is the disposition of the fiber of their heart: but neither this *poetic religion*, nor this *purely philosophical* homage, implies a complete and sincere adherence to a supernatural order of things, to a religion essentially divine.

The Divinity of Religion: the Divinity of the Christian Revelation, the divine authority of the Catholic Church; this is the one essential point to be established. A young man cannot study everything in detail; he should not promise himself to be able at all times to answer victoriously all the objections which the genius of evil incessantly invents; but he will have an impregnable defence; he will know that because his Religion is certainly divine, the particular difficulties which may be urged against it, are only apparent; he can say at least, that there can be no truth contrary to the truth which he holds from God Himself, and that consequently either his knowledge of the dogma is inexact, or that the objection presented to his mind is an error.

[1] St. James i. 5, 6, 17.

A SKETCH OF THE LIFE OF REV. JOSEPH BROECKAERT, S. J.

Rev. Joseph Broeckaert was born of pious and respectable parents in Lokeren, a town in the province of East Flanders, Belgium, May 5th, 1807. He grew up to boyhood and early youth in the days of those persecutions, which, stirred up by the Dutch Government against the Catholic religion, gave new strength to the faith of truly Christian families and inspired them with the courage to conceive and execute great and noble designs for the advancement of religion. In the year 1825 he completed his classical course at Alost in the College of Canon Van Cronbrugghe. About that very time King William ordered all Catholic colleges to be closed. The generous youth then resolved to consecrate himself wholly to God and the Church by promoting the interests of religious education in the Society of Jesus, into which several other Belgians had already been admitted as members. He went to Switzerland to carry out this purpose, and arrived at Estavayer, Oct. 26th, 1825. There he began his life of novice. After having finished his novitiate and his philosophical studies he was sent by his superiors to Brieg to teach grammar. While busily engaged in this new career he heard that a civil war had broken out in his native land and that after

hard struggles Belgium had regained her liberties and her rights. The Jesuits were not slow in availing themselves of the freedom granted to all. They returned to Belgium, and in the year 1832 founded a new province of their order. Attached to this province, Father Broeckaert taught rhetoric for thirteen years at Alost, Ghent, Brussels and Tronchiennes. He was next rector of the college of Alost for three years, 1845 to 1848. The numberless annoyances and the continued hard work which fall to the lot of teachers in newly begun colleges in a land but just freed from religious oppression had told hard on Father Broeckaert's health.

From the year 1851 he was unable to lead the wearing life of a professor. He acted as prefect of studies at Tronchiennes and Liege. For one year, however, 1856–57, he occupied the chair of Moral Theology in St. Benno's College, North Wales, England. For several years he fulfilled the duties of the sacred ministry with great devotion and self-sacrifice in the cities of Ghent, Liege and Malines.

Falling dangerously ill in 1867, he was sent to Louvain; and there with the exception of one year he spent the rest of his life. But his was not an idle life. He kept himself busy in writing various articles on different subjects and on the death of Father Edward Terwercoren succeeded him as editor of the monthly periodical called "*Les Précis Historiques.*" This work he zealously continued up to his death, and did much to give the periodical a more elevated literary tone, so as to satisfy the

more critical reader. The praise due to Father Broeckaert may be put in these few words: he deserved well of literature. Seriously engaged as he was for so long a time in the study of ancient and modern authors he could not but attain to a more than ordinary excellence in a knowledge of them. He gave a no mean proof of his uncommon erudition in his excellent work, "*Le Guide du Jeune Litterateur.*" It was the fruit of many years' labor and experience. It was not only adopted as a text book in the colleges of his order, but received the warmest praise from the committee appointed by the government to award the quinquennial prize of literature. He wrote many other books for the use of students, such as the Evidences of the Catholic Religion, entitled by him "*Le Fait Divin,*" and annotated selections from Cicero and other Latin and French authors. His "*Modèles Français*" deserve special mention. But not only literature profited by his labors, he worked, too, for the advancement of piety. He published the lives of Blessed Charles Spinola, S. J. and of St. Ludgard, and a book of meditations for Advent and Lent.

A word concerning his life as a Christian and a religious. He was a man of lively faith, most devotedly attached to the Roman Church, of remarkable piety and strongly bent on promoting the interests of the Sacred Heart. The Society of Jesus which had welcomed him an exile from home in the midst of the trials of her regeneration, ever found in him the same generous devoted son who had her inter-

ests near at heart. He never failed in religious obedience. Of a charmingly happy disposition he ever kept a youthful heart even in his old age.

For a long time he suffered from a serious malady. In his last years he found that he was also afflicted with heart disease. Death had long given him the warning, and like a faithful and watchful servant he had long heeded it and prepared himself for the sudden coming of our Lord. No one, however, dreamt of its being so near at hand. On the morning of February 19th, 1880, his brethren in religion were startled by the news that he had been found dead in his bed. The day before he had gone to Brussels, to arrange about his periodical. He returned the same day, without showing any signs of fatigue, and after spending the evening as cheerfully as ever, he went quietly to bed as usual. Everything about him showed that he had fallen asleep in the Lord.

He was buried among his brethren in the cemetery of the abbey of Parc, near Louvain.

PART FIRST.

THE CHRISTIAN REVELATION.

THE FACT DIVINE.

PART FIRST.

THE CHRISTIAN REVELATION.

CHAPTER I.

DEFINITION OF REVELATION.

WHAT is Revelation? By *Revelation* is generally understood a manifestation of truth in a supernatural way; the Christian Revelation is the whole of the revealed truths that compose the doctrine of the restoration of the human race through our Lord Jesus Christ. It is one in its end, and in the connection and correlation of all its parts.

Revelation does not do away with reason, for it presupposes its existence; reason leads man to faith, causes him to acknowledge the fact of the divine revelation, and teaches him that he owes to this authority faith and obedience; he is the enemy of reason, who in advance is determined to admit no revelation. His right to decisive proofs none will question; further he cannot go without repudiating reason itself.

Revelation, therefore, is addressed to our reason, and demands of it upon proof an assent conformable to its nature; but in its object, that is, in the truths it teaches, it is elevated *above* reason; never can it be *contrary* thereto. Among the revealed truths there are *mysteries*, the existence of which God makes known, though it is not possible for us to discover the *manner* of their existence; nature herself is full of mysteries for our reason; everywhere our investigations terminate in some mysterious and impenetrable point. How then can we fathom the wonders of Heaven and the secrets of God?

We shall not stop to prove the possibility of revelation; all that is requisite is to form an exact idea of it; besides, every question upon this head will be answered by the very fact of the Christian revelation.

This divine fact of the Christian revelation should be studied according to its nature as a fact. Now we do not demonstrate a fact by abstract reasoning, or, in technical language, *a priori*, but *a posteriori*, that is, by its effects and by undisputed testimony. The question is not whether the existence of man can be explained otherwise than by *facts*, nor of substituting your wisdom for that of God. Did God reveal Himself to man? Did He impart to him a portion of His own omniscience? Did He declare to him His will? Here we have the whole question; let us keep it in view.

CHAPTER II.

SOURCES OF THE PRIMITIVE REVELATION.

WHERE shall we search for the evidence of the Christian revelation? Among all nations and in every kind of documents; but chiefly among the Jewish people and in their books of unimpeachable authority. These books are, to every Christian, sacred books, written under divine inspiration; here we consider solely their historical value as documents, and we put them on a level with other merely human monuments, upon the critical value of which any fact must stand or fall.

The first documents to be consulted are included in the Pentateuch of Moses. The Pentateuch (*πεντὲ, τεύχω*) is composed of five books: *Genesis* (*γένεσις*), a sublime and touching narrative of the first ages; *Exodus* (*ἐξ, ὁδός*), the history of the wonderful going out of Egypt; *Leviticus*, the religious code concerning the functions of the tribe of Levi; *Numbers*, the census of the children of Israel; *Deuteronomy* (*δεύτερος, νόμος*), a repetition of the law, completing the civil organization of the Jews. The first two books are of direct importance to our subject.

Considered as merely human documents, these books are of the highest historical value. We ad-

duce a few arguments in support of this important thesis.

I. The antiquity of the Mosaic narrative. This point is beyond dispute; the author of the Pentateuch precedes the most ancient profane historians by ten centuries. What a facility was there in his time to learn the facts exactly, considering the longevity of the men of the first age of the world! At Moses' time there might have been still living persons who had seen Joseph, whose father had seen Sem, who had known Methusala, the contemporary of Adam.

II. The care with which these books are preserved. Besides the original kept with the ark, authentic transcripts were made and carefully revised and guarded by the priests and Levites, and numerous copies were in the possession of the people. What did these books contain? They contained the history of events of the greatest interest to the whole Jewish nation; in them was their constitution, their laws, everything that gave them national autonomy; they were, therefore, closely connected with the very existence of the nation; in their eyes, the Pentateuch was a sacred book, a divine book, the *Book* of books. The least alteration of this document was looked upon as an enormous crime, and, in fact, the Jews have never ceased to respect the Bible, not even since they have read in its pages the condemnation of their own obstinacy.

The only period at which we can imagine the preservation and integrity of the sacred books to have

been imperilled, was that of the captivity of the Jews; but God guarded against this danger,

Firstly, by the numerous copies that had been made before that time.

Secondly, by the conformity of the Jewish and Samaritan codices, notwithstanding the difference of idiom and the hostility of the two peoples.

Thirdly, by the extraordinary care successively taken of them by Esdras, Nehemias, and Judas Machabeus, seconded by the whole synagogue.

Fourthly, these precautionary measures were subsequently completed by the celebrated Greek version, called the Septuagint, which was made by order of Ptolemy, the King of Egypt, nearly three hundred years before Christ.[1]

III. The intrinsic marks of veracity visible upon every page of the Mosaic narrative. The author disguises neither the faults of his ancestors, nor the perverse dispositions of his people, nor his own failings. The unadorned simplicity of his style displays to us, not the ordinary historian, but a pontiff rehearsing before his people, and as it were before the whole human race, events of which the universe had been the theatre, and writing down what the whole earth witnessed.

IV. The scientific exactness of the chronology and of what is called the cosmogony of Moses. In this respect, the author of Genesis not only surpasses the ancient pagans who wrote long after him; he puts to shame those who in our days have invented all sorts

[1] Huet, *Demonstratio Evangelica*, 4; Bossuet, *Hist. Univ.*, 2. 27.

of systems to disparage his account. The learned of the present day accept it, and far from adopting the falsehoods of Voltaire and his school, in proportion as they make new discoveries, do they also become the more decided defenders of the facts recorded by Moses.

We will quote two oracles of modern science. Cuvier says: "Moses has left us a cosmogony, the exactitude of which is verified every day in a wonderful manner. Recent geological observations perfectly agree with Genesis upon the order in which all organic substances were successively created. . . . ." And Ampère, in his *Théorie de la terre:* "Either Moses was as profoundly versed in the sciences as any one of our time or he was inspired."

V. This remark is applicable to all the important events of the primitive history of the human race. Many years since the labors of the Society of Calcutta, and of many others, vindicated Moses from the accumulated charges of the arrogant though ignorant school of Voltaire; still more recent and remarkable researches have placed in the clearest light the historical exactitude of the Bible.

We will record here some points already established by science:

Geology, in all its positive inductions, is found to be in perfect accord with the history of the creation and the deluge.[1]

[1] Jéhan, *Nouveau traité des sciences géologiques, considérées dans leur rapport avec la Religion;* also his *Dictionnaire de Cosmogonie* and the *Encyclopédie* of Migne.—Glaire, *Les livres saints vengée;* Buckland, Serres, etc.

The science of philology confirms the fact of the confusion of tongues at Babel.[1]

Modern ethnographic researches furnish irresistible proofs of the migration of nations from the center of Asia toward the different parts of the globe, and consequently of the unity of the human race.[2]

Archæological discoveries confirm in every particular the history of the relations of the Hebrews with Egypt, and even the topographical details of the route of Moses.[3] The excavations at Ninive and Babylon have shown the veracity of the subsequent accounts of the Bible,[4] while the discoveries of ancient coins and medals have vindicated against infidels and Protestants the accuracy of the chronology of the books of Maccabees.[5] In a word, all the historical or archæological researches in Egypt, India, China and America confirm the narrative of the Holy Scriptures.[6]

VI. The connection which exists between all the books of the New and of the Old Testament. All,

[1] *Lectures of Cardinal Wiseman.*

[2] Gfroerer, *Histoire primitive du genre humain;* Petit-Radel, *Monuments Cyclopéens;* De Humboldt, *Cosmos; Annals de la philosophie chrétienne*, T. 5, etc.

[3] Champollion-Figeac, *L'Egypte ancienne;* Letronne, Rosselini, etc.—Cardinal Wiseman has given a summary in his *Lectures.*

[4] Layard, *Discoveries in the Ruins of Ninive and Babylon*, 1853. See the periodicals of the time.

[5] Fraelich, S. J., *Annales regum, et rerum Syriæ nummis illustrati.*

[6] See *Les traditions indiennes sur le déluge*, par F. Neve, etc., etc.

in fact, explain and confirm one another; belonging to one and the same revelation, they follow it in all its developments, until the time when the sacred deposit is committed to the Church. The proofs which establish the veracity of the Gospel and the writings of the Apostles will confirm also the direct proofs of the veracity of the Pentateuch.

CHAPTER III.

THE AUTHOR OF REVELATION.

BEFORE examining the facts which pertain directly to the Christian revelation, let us with Moses briefly consider the fact of the creation, by which God revealed and still continues to reveal Himself to man. We will content ourselves with this single proof of the existence and the infinite perfections of God.

This proof may be reduced to this enthymeme: *The visible objects which surround us have no existence of themselves; therefore they received it from some thing else, and, in the last analysis, from a first being, who possesses in himself the cause of his existence.* Let us develop the argument.

That visible objects have not in themselves the cause of their existence may be concluded both from their imperfection and their transformations.

Firstly, from their *imperfection;* how can we suppose that that which has neither intelligence, nor will, nor any activity whatsoever, is a being existing independently of the concurrence of any other being, and is self-existent?

Secondly, from their *transformations;* consider the most perfect being upon the earth, go back from the son to the father, from the father to the grandfather, from grandfathers to great-grandfathers, you

will at last come to a first man receiving life from a Supreme Being, or else go back in an infinite series, which is an absurdity. We can easily conceive an indefinite series, that is to say, a series without a fixed limit to which we can always add, but not a series really infinite. Every series is susceptible of increase, but every augmentation is repugnant to that which is infinite.

It is therefore proven that above and outside of this series of objects, there exists a being who, by himself, essentially and necessarily possesses existence, who is called *he who is*, everything else having only a borrowed existence. This Being, therefore, did not begin to exist, that is to say, He is *eternal;* first cause of all things, He knows neither subjection nor dependence. All the divine perfections may be deduced from the principle which we have demonstrated.

Accordingly, God Himself gave this as the essential idea of His own nature, as the very name of God. Moses, entrusted with a special mission to his people, said to God:

> Lo, I shall go to the children of Israel and say to them, the God of your fathers hath sent me to you. If they shall say to me, what is His name? what shall I say to them? God said to Moses: "*I AM WHO AM.*" He said: "Thus shalt thou say to the children of Israel, *HE WHO IS* hath sent me to you." (Ex. iii. 13, 14.)

In order to deduce the existence and perfections of God from the existence of visible things, it is not necessary to investigate the mysteries of nature, nor to comprehend the order and harmony which unite

all the parts of this vast universe; it is sufficient to consider the existence of a single object, and then a man can say: "*I exist, therefore God exists.*" What a certainty, then, when we study the laws which regulate the movements of the heavenly bodies in the immensity of space, when we discover life and motion in objects of microscopic size, when each new discovery of science reveals to us some new combination of the divine plan! How many times has not the unbeliever himself seen his doubts disappear before the sublime spectacle of nature! "If a clock proves a clockmaker," says Voltaire, "if a palace announces an architect, does not the universe proclaim a supreme intelligence?"

They are inexcusable, says the Apostle St. Paul, who have not glorified God, whose existence and perfections are so clearly revealed by nature; and the pagan philosophers must have closed their eyes to the light when they substituted for *HIM WHO IS*, ridiculous and absurd divinities.

Observe the consequences: "Wherefore God gave them up to the desires of their heart, to uncleanness."

This passage deserves to be quoted in full:

For the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven, against all impiety and injustice of those men that detain the truth of God in injustice.

Because that which is known of God is manifest in them. For God hath manifested it to them.

For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things which are made; His eternal power also, and divinity; so that they are inexcusable.

Because that, when they had known God, they have not

glorified Him as God, nor gave thanks; but became vain in their thoughts, and their foolish heart was darkened.

For professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

And they changed the glory of the incorruptible God, into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man, and of birds, and of four-footed beasts, and of creeping things.

Wherefore God gave them up to the desires of their heart, to uncleanness. (Rom. i. 18-24.)

At the present day there are some who deny truths so clear, and who, in their heart, rather than from conviction, deny the existence of God, the Creator and Supreme Judge. *The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.* "*Nemo Deum negat nisi cui expedit Deum non esse*," says St. Augustine. This may be translated by these words of J. J. Rousseau: "Let your soul always desire the existence of God, and you will never doubt it." We do not speak of those only, who, wrapt in their own darkness, refuse to interrogate the phenomena which appear before them, and with whom everything exists *by chance*, that is, without reason: such skeptics deserve only contempt; let us rather point out the more serious follies of the pretended sages of our time.

I. Some deify nature herself, and, under cover of this abstract term, they establish *Materialism* and *Pantheism*. This system is only Atheism in disguise. Where everything is God, there is no personal and living God, no Creator nor Providence. Then man is accountable to no higher power, law is usurpation, and all crimes are justifiable.

The whole system of the materialists is contained in a few words in the book of Wisdom:

"For they have said, reasoning with themselves, but not right: The time of our life is short and tedious; and in the end of a man there is no remedy; and no man hath been known to have returned from hell.

"For we are born of nothing, and after this we shall be as if we had not been; for the breath in our nostrils is smoke, and speech a spark to move the heart. . . . .

"Come, therefore, and let us enjoy the good things that are present, and let us speedily use the creatures as in youth." (Wisd. ii, 1, 2, 3, etc.)

In order to give some semblance of plausibility to their impious and immoral doctrine, the supporters of this system are obliged to have recourse to unintelligible reasonings upon the *essential nature of matter*, that is, upon that which is least accessible to human investigations. All these vain quibblings are worthless when weighed in the balance of truth. "It is repugnant to reason," says M. Cousin, "to assert that the being who is the first and last cause of our soul, is an abstract being, possessing less than he gave, having neither personality, liberty, intelligence, justice, nor love. Either God is inferior to man, or He possesses all that is permanent and substantial in man, and infinitely more." Those who assert that matter is eternal, and thus contradict the Catholic dogma and the correct notion of the creation, must, if they are consistent, end in Pantheism.

II. Others, boasting of a wonderful profundity of mind, refuse to admit the principle of causation,

that is, the soundness of the reasoning which traces effects back to their causes. To these depraved minds there is nothing certain, nothing true; they undermine the very foundations of human intelligence; were they consistent in practice they would be literally fools. "Calling themselves wise, they became fools." German philosophy, the school of Hegel in particular, referring everything to the *principle of identity*, declares that *being* and *nonentity*, *yes* and *no*, are the same thing. Having attacked religion in the name of reason, they end by destroying reason itself.

In Catholic countries, these pretended sages, for fear of shocking honest minds, envelop themselves in darkness and equivocations, and "give us," according to J. J. Rousseau, "for the true principles of things, unintelligible systems, which are constructed in their imagination."

What reason demonstrates, Moses proclaims as the first fact in the history of the world. "In the beginning God created Heaven and earth." He *created*, He made from nothing, He gave existence to that which had no existence. "He spoke," says David, "and they were made, He commanded and they were created." God said: Let there be light, and there was light (Gen. i.); let the stars shine, and the stars replied: Here we are (Baruch. iii.)

Immense and eternal in Himself, God created objects necessarily limited, in time and in space; He subjects them to laws which in the last analysis are reduced to that Providence which governs everything

in perfect harmony. "He hath reached from end to end mightily, and disposed all things sweetly."

Was the world created immediately before serving as the abode of man, or did centuries elapse between this primitive creation and the preparations made for the arrival of the new king of the earth? Was our globe created with that admirable diversity of terrestrial strata which the investigations of science disclose, or are these phenomena the result of alternations of sea and land in the earth's surface, which for centuries modified the formation of the globe? These and similar questions must be answered by scientific researches, independently of revelation, and it is in this sense that God has given the world over to the disputes of the learned.

CHAPTER IV.

ORIGIN AND DIGNITY OF MAN.

THE earth is prepared to receive its inhabitants; the Creator has been pleased to adorn it with a munificence truly divine. "And God said: Let us make man to our own image and likeness; and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth (Gen. i. 26, 27).

"And the Lord God formed man of the slime of the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul" (Gen. ii. 7).

Such is the origin, such the dignity of man. His body composed of the dust of the earth, his soul a breath from the Divinity.

Created in the image of God, and by a consultation by which the plurality of the divine persons is revealed, the human soul represents better than any other creature upon the earth, not only the incomparable sublimity of its model, but also the mysterious relations of the three persons in the unity of the divine nature. In fact, according to Bossuet, *the image of the Trinity* beams forth magnificently "in the reasonable creature; like the Father it has being; like the Son, it has intelligence; like the Holy

Ghost, it has love; like the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, it has in its being, in its intelligence, in its love, one and the same felicity and life. You can take from it nothing without taking all. Happy creature, perfect in resemblance, if He is the only object of its desires. . . . . God becomes the perfection of its being, the immortal nourishment of its understanding, and the life of its love."

What else are the eternal principles of truth and virtue, those unchangeable rules of the reason and will of man, but a reflex of the attributes of the most perfect Being. In whatever manner metaphysicians explain the existence of these principles in us, they always end by declaring that it is human nature stamped with the divine image. These principles are the source of all sound philosophy, all morality and all justice.

Pagan antiquity and modern sophistry, having rejected these grand ideas, have given us in their stead mere fables and ridiculous suppositions. To believe certain sophists of the eighteenth century, man differs from his dog only by his dress (according to Diderot), and from the porpoise only by the development of some members (this is the opinion of Lamettrie). These same so-called philosophers have not been more fortunate in their theories upon the unity of the human family, the social condition of the first men, and the real antiquity of the human race.

CHAPTER V.

THE FALL OF MAN.

To the natural qualities of man God had superadded gifts of pure bounty, and the promise of an eternal felicity. But, in order that man might have the merit of his free submission, He gave him a command of easy observance. Man disobeyed, and incurred for himself and his posterity the displeasure of his Creator. Such is the incontestable fact of the fall of man (Gen. iii.), the first in order of the events that belong directly to the Christian revelation. From this fact alone, and without having recourse to abstract arguments, we can also deduce both the natural subjection of man to his Creator, and his free will, of which he made so fatal a use, and the interposition of divine Providence in his favor; in a word, this fact demolishes the entire system of the deists.

To the authority of Moses' history of the fall of man, we may add the traditions of all the peoples of the world. The memory of a first age of happiness, quickly followed by so many calamities, would of necessity be perpetuated everywhere, and at length be modified and mingled with fables; such a result has occurred even by the testimony of the enemies of revelation. "The fall of man," says Voltaire, "is the foundation of the theology of all the ancient na-

tions. Of so many different religions, there are none which have not expiations for their principal end. Man has ever felt that he had need of clemency."

Benjamin Constant, another free-thinker, having ascertained this astonishing similarity of all mythologies, remarks that "there are in numerous details such minute points of resemblance that it is impossible to discover the cause of them in nature or in chance."

We know that the starting point of the Greek mythology is the golden age, which was quickly succeeded by the age of iron with all its degradation.[1] The fables of Prometheus (or Epimethus) and Pandora, of Typhon and Echidna, half woman and half serpent, embody the story of the fall of man.[2] According to Plato (in his *Timæus*), the nature and the faculties of man were changed and corrupted from the beginning. Cicero cites the opinion of the ancients, who attribute our state of misery to some great crime committed in the earliest time; and he himself, struck by the conflict of passions to which man yields by turns, concluded therefrom a primitive deterioration of his nature. "There is in man, as it were, a divine spark smouldering in ruins." (*De Rep.* ii.)

In the ancient theology of the Persians, the story of the seduction of Meskhia and Meskhiana by Ahriman, who accosts them under the form of a serpent,

[1] Ovid, *Metamorph.* — Virgil, *Georg.* 1.

[2] Hesiod, *Theogon.* v. 510, et seq. — *Labors and days*, 47. — Æschylus, *Prometheus Unchained.*

recalls the most important circumstances of the seduction of Adam and Eve.[1]

The Chinese books (*Kings*) ascribe the changes effected in nature to the revolt of man against Heaven. The *Vedas*, the religious books of India, contain similar statements.

Recent discoveries in America are still more remarkable. The first conquerors of Mexico had made known some traditions of this country, but their reports had been received with extreme distrust; now these facts are proved by a host of monuments. The hieroglyphic pictures of the Aztecs always represent the first woman in conversation with a great serpent; she is called the *mother of our flesh and the serpent-woman.* A stone, dug up by chance under an old oak in Pennsylvania, bore a picture which would not have been out of place on the first pages of the Bible: a man and woman separated by a tree; she has fruit in her hand; around them are deer, bears and birds.

Such monuments prove not only the point in question, but also that the first inhabitants of the new world were descended from Adam, and also an anterior state of civilization whence those people had degenerated to a savage condition. This refutes an error of J. J. Rousseau, "one of the most dangerous sophists of his time," according to de Maistre (*Soirées*), "yet destitute of true knowledge, sagacity, and depth of understanding, but with a seeming depth which consists entirely in words. He constantly took the savage for the primitive man, while

[1] Anquetil du Perron and others upon Persia.

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he is only the descendant of a man detached from the great tree of civilization."

What gives to all these traditions an evident mark of common origin, is that all have retained the strangest circumstances of the fall of man — *the serpent.* There were without doubt contradictory ideas and sentiments upon the nature of the serpent, ideas and sentiments which are found equally in all mythologies. Now he is the cunning enchanter, the symbol of eloquence, the python of the oracles, a sublime and mysterious being, the protector of the peoples who adore him; again, he is the author of all our woes, the corrupter of the works of God, a terrible monster destined to perish one day by the hand of God.

The documents to which we have appealed do not all possess an equal authenticity, nor a decisive value, but the proofs as a whole are above all criticism. The degradation of man by sin is a fact too well established by historical monuments to encounter serious adversaries. We shall have to seek for them among the corrupt sophists who in these days have justified the most shameful vices. But with them this is less a well considered opinion of the mind than a lame excuse for the perversity of the heart.

There are others who, unable to deny the fall of man, are content to raise objections against the doctrine of the transmission of *original sin.* In order to refute their arguments, all that is required is to observe that the historical proofs apply equally to both facts:

the universal belief in the fall of the first man embraces equally the degradation of his posterity; it includes by implication the doctrine of original sin. If your intellect is unable to conceive the reason of this, the fact is nevertheless incontestable, just as there are innumerable mysteries in nature which you admit without being able to comprehend.

If it is not given us to penetrate the ways of divine justice, it is not the less important that we form an exact idea of the revealed fact and the dogma included therein.

What is the nature of original sin, as it exists in the descendants of Adam? In order to reply to this question, we must first distinguish two things in the sin of Adam: the *act* of disobedience to God, and the *state* of sin which is the consequence of that act. The act is not and cannot be the deed of those who did not yet exist; it belongs exclusively to the first man. Adam performed an act by *his* will, but by this act, according to the Council of Trent, "he lost for us, as well as for himself, the holiness which God had conferred upon him." This is the *state* of sin, *the death of the soul*, according to the same Council, which we inherit together with human nature.

This state of sin consists, therefore, in the loss of the sanctifying grace which God had bestowed upon man, together with the duty of preserving it. Let us bear in mind that Adam had received supernatural and gratuitous gifts which he was to transmit to his posterity. Deprived of these gifts by his sin, he became incapable of transmitting them; and all

his descendants, like him, appeared before God as a disfigured work, as an object of wrath, *filii iræ*, according to the expression of St. Paul. It is in this way that all men have sinned in the first man. (Rom. v.)

The loss of original justice did not carry with it that of the essential properties of human nature; after his fall man retains the faculty of deciding between right and wrong. His free will, although weakened, is not destroyed, says the Council of Trent, and the sources of the grace of Jesus Christ are open to enable him to surmount the dangers of this life, and attain, if he desires, to the highest perfection.[1]

[1] The Holy Council of Trent has taken extraordinary care to clear up the grave question of *original sin* which is intimately connected with that of our *justification by Jesus Christ*. After having in its fifth session set forth the nature and the consequences of the sin of Adam, at the next session it thus sums up the Catholic doctrine upon the state of his posterity.

Cum omnes homines in prævaricatione Adæ innocentiam perdidissent, facti immundi, et, ut Apostolus inquit, natura filii iræ, usque adeo servi erant peccati et sub potestate diaboli ac mortis, ut non modo gentes per vim naturæ, sed ne Judaei quidem per ipsam etiam litteram legis Moysi, inde liberari aut surgere possent; tametsi in eis liberum arbitrium minime extinctum esset, viribus licet attenuatum, et inclinatum.

We here cite the Council of Trent not for the purpose of proving the fact of the fall of man, but to define the sense and indicate the limit assigned to the dogma by the Catholic Church. Thus while pursuing the historical order of the FACT DIVINE, we allow ourselves to touch incidentally upon certain important questions.

CHAPTER VI.

THE PROMISE OF A REDEEMER.

At the very moment that man was punished for his rebellion, he received the vague and general, but nevertheless positive and formal promise of a Redeemer. God said to the serpent, not to the animal that is destitute of understanding, but to the evil spirit who had made the serpent his instrument: "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed; she (her seed, according to the Hebrew text,) shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel."[1] (Genesis iii. 15.)

Henceforth, encouraged by this promise, all men of faith directed their most ardent yearnings toward its accomplishment: and God, on His part, was pleased to reveal to His faithful servants the mystery of His mercies, to gladden them, as the Scripture says, by the sight of a Redeemer: "Abraham, your father rejoiced that he might see my day; he saw it and was glad.[2] Among the men thus highly privileged in early times may be mentioned Job, an Idumean Prince, who at the height of his sufferings,

[1] *Inimicitias ponam inter te et mulierem et semen tuum et semen illius: ipsa (ipsum) conteret caput tuum et tu insidiaberis calcaneo ejus.* Gen. iii. 15.

[2] *Abraham pater vester exultavit ut videret diem meum; vidit, et gavisus est.* St. John viii. 56.

was sustained by his faith in the divine promises. "I know," said he, "that my Redeemer liveth, and in the last day I shall rise out of the earth; and I shall be clothed again in my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God, whom I myself shall see, and my eyes shall behold, and not another; this my hope is laid up in my bosom." (Job xix.) A remarkable testimony, which embraces the redemption of man, the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body.[1]

The belief in a Redeemer to come was found among all peoples, connected with the belief in our degradation. It is unnecessary to speak of the Jewish nation, who, as we shall see, existed only that they might preserve this promise and prepare the world for its accomplishment. The Prometheus of the Greeks, according to the mythological drama of Æschylus, was to be delivered from his punishment only "when a God should offer himself to endure his sufferings and be willing to descend for him into the depths of Tartarus." The Typhon of the Egyptians, a malignant genius which was changed into a serpent, "after having overwhelmed the earth with all kinds of evil," according to Plutarch (on Isis and Osiris), "was punished for these crimes by the wife and sister of Osiris who destroyed his rage." Plato represents Socrates as saying, "that we must wait

[1] *Scio quod Redemptor meus vivit, et in novissimo die de terra surrecturus sum: et rursum circumdabor pelle mea, et in carne mea videbo Deum meum. Quem visurus sum ego ipse et oculi mei conspecturi sunt, et non alius: reposita est haec spes mea in sinu meo.* Job xix. 25, 26, 27.

for some one to come and teach us the manner in which we should behave toward the gods and men." In another place the expected teacher of the human race is called: "Saviour, God, Son of God."

Among the Persians, Methras sent by Ormus was to overcome Ahriman; the Indians expected an incarnation of Vichnu or Brahma, to repair the evils caused by Kaliga, the great serpent. According to a letter of P. Bouchet (inserted in *les lettres édifiantes*), they sacrificed a sheep, reciting at the same time this prayer: "When will the Saviour be born, when will the Redeemer appear?"

Confucius announced to the Chinese the coming of the Holy One sent by Heaven, possessing all science, all power. "He is one with Tien (God), and, without Tien, the world could not acknowledge him; he alone can offer a holocaust worthy of the majesty of Schanz-Ti — Sovereign God of Heaven."[1]

The Edda, the mythological collection of the Scandinavians, represents "the great serpent vanquished by Thor, the first-born of the children of Odin, and the most powerful of the gods." In Mexico the serpent was to be torn to pieces by the Great Spirit; in Peru it was a son of the sun who was to regenerate the world. In a word, says the unbelieving Boulanger, "there has been no people who have not had an expectation of this kind."

To complete the demonstration of the universal

[1] These accounts and many others are found in the work of Schmit: *Rédemption du genre humain annoncée par les traditions et les croyances, etc.*

belief in the first dogmas of revelation, it is sufficient to cast a glance over the religious institutions of different peoples. Ceremonies the strangest and apparently the most diverse entirely agree upon this important point: the expectation of a Redeemer. This is the faith of all peoples, as it was before Jesus Christ the only way of eternal salvation.[1] This faith is displayed in the most striking manner in sacrifices, whose existence is universal.

To appease the offended Deity by the immolation of victims: such is the general idea that has inspired sacrifices, and this idea could only have originated in the conviction of man's degradation and the hope of a promised Redeemer. Let us examine the nature of these sacrifices:

I. The innocent takes the place of the guilty: this is the fundamental idea of sacrifices. Apart from certain offerings which may pass for acts of pure acknowledgment toward the author of nature, all sacrifices have for their end the appeasing of the Deity by the sufferings of an innocent victim. Now

[1] It may be seen from this that the Catholic Church is far from considering the Pagans as a mass condemned to eternal punishment. According to St. Thomas it is sufficient to have an implicit faith in the Saviour included in the belief in God. "From the beginning of the human race," says St. Augustine (Questions upon the Pagans), "all those who have believed in Jesus Christ, *who have known Him as much as they were able* and who have lived according to His precepts in piety and justice, in whatever time and in whatever place they have lived, have been without doubt saved by Him." The wisdom of God, says Solomon (Proverbs), reserves salvation as a treasure to all who have an upright heart.

the idea of such a substitution is not derived from reason, since it contradicts reason, nor from any assignable cause except the belief in Him who would one day immolate Himself for the salvation of all.

To this belief may be referred the self-sacrifices so famous in antiquity. Decius devoting himself to death thought to disarm thereby the anger of the gods against his country.

II. The immolation is bloody, and founded upon the universal opinion that the remission can only be obtained by blood. "It was believed," says the Count de Maistre, "that the innocent could atone for the guilty; whence they concluded that the life being guilty, a life less precious could be offered and accepted for another. They therefore offered the blood of animals, and this soul offered for a soul the ancients called *ἀντίψυχον*, *vicariam animam*, or a soul for a soul.[1]

They had faith in the virtue of bloody sacrifices, even in favor of the dead, as we see by a text of Varro,[2] and as Plato formally declares[3] (*De Rep.*).

Baron Von Humboldt cites among the symbolic figures of the Mexican rituals an animal pierced with darts — a touching picture of suffering innocence, according to the traditions of the country.

[1] *Cor pro corde, precor, pro fibris accipe fibras;*
Hanc animam vobis pro meliore damus.
(Ovid. *Fasti* vi.)

[2] *Ut sanguine effuso inferis satisfaciat.* Varro.

[3] See this passage and many other particulars in the *Soirées des St. Pétersbourg*, and in the treatise of de Maistre *Sur les Sacrifices.*

III. Human victims show how deeply was rooted in the minds of all nations the idea of the bloody immolation of the innocent in place of the guilty. After having chosen animals as pure, as innocent, and, to use the expression, as human as possible, man went so far as to sacrifice his fellow-man; parents immolated even their children. A detestable sacrifice; but the more repugnant it is to the feelings of nature, the more it attests the foundation of truth which the spirit of evil had turned to his own profit.

The horrible practice of human sacrifices before Christianity was more general than is commonly supposed, and everywhere they were employed with the idea of averting the divine wrath from the heads of the guilty, in order to make it fall with all its severity upon the victim.

The Gauls, according to the report of Cæsar, thought to appease the wrath of their gods by human victims.[1] Even Rome did the same in great calamities; Athens immolated human victims every year, without counting those whose blood bedewed the tombs of its heroes. The Phœnicians and the Carthaginians sacrificed their children; the inhabitants of Peru immolated theirs with their own hands. In Mexico human victims could be counted by thousands. "This unfortunate people," says the historian of the conquest of Mexico (Ant. Solis),

[1] *Pro victimis homines immolant (Galli), aut se immolaturos vovent administrisque ad ea sacrificia Druidibus utuntur; quod pro vita hominis, nisi hominis vita reddatur, non posse aliter deorum immortalium numen placari arbitrantur: publiceque ejusdem generis habent instituta sacrificia.* De Bello Gall. vi. 16.

"could not form the idea of a true sacrifice unless a man died for the salvation of others."

The uniformity of this belief among the Jewish people presents a still more astonishing spectacle. In everything else Moses takes extraordinary care to remove from his people everything that resembles pagan ceremonies; in the single article of sacrifices he varies from his uniform course. Without doubt he prohibited human victims in the most formal manner, and under penalty of stoning the offenders to death.[1] But as for bloody sacrifices, Moses not only authorized them, but he multiplies them so much that the Apostle Paul said of the Mosaic law: Almost every legal purification was made with blood. (Hebrews ix.) Did the Jewish people understand this permanent figure? St. Thomas affirms[2] that they did, and it is hardly possible to doubt it.

"Now," says the Count de Maistre, "if on the one hand we consider that all this doctrine of antiquity was only the prophetic cry of the human race announcing salvation by blood; and that on the other hand Christianity has come to justify this prophecy by putting the reality in place of the type, so that the

[1] Voltaire has pretended the contrary, but he has been victoriously refuted by Abbé Guénée in *les lettres de quelques juifs, 3e partie.* It is true, and this confirms our reflections, that the prevaricating Jews have at different epochs offered and immolated their children, not to the true God, but to Moloch.

[2] *Quorum quidem sacrificiorum explicite majores cognoscebant, minores autem sub velamine illorum sacrificiorum credentes ea divinitus esse deposita, de Christo venturo quodammodo velatam habebant cognitionem.* II. Q. 2.

innate and radical dogma has not ceased to announce the great sacrifice which is the basis of the new revelation, and that this revelation, sparkling with all the rays of truth, proves in its turn the divine origin of the dogma which we constantly perceive as a luminous point in the midst of the darkness of paganism, there results from this accord one of the most convincing proofs that it is impossible to imagine." (*Soirées* 9.)

CHAPTER VII.

THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

With the lapse of time the primitive traditions gradually became corrupted, while the sound notions of duty were nearly obliterated from the minds of men. Without the extraordinary assistance of divine Providence, society itself would have been plunged into the most frightful abyss. This is only too evident from the history of the most civilized nations of antiquity, and we might prove by the sad tendencies of man the necessity of a second revelation, more explicit than the primitive one; but faithful to our plan, we shall content ourselves with studying the positive facts of the history of religion.

The fundamental fact of a more explicit revelation is the choice which God made of a people for the purpose of transmitting the deposit of His word and promise. For this end, God chose the Jewish people, and sealed them with His divine seal. Yet the other nations are not rejected; all may be saved by the observance of the natural law, and by faith in the Redeemer to come; and the privileges of the Jewish people only facilitate their accomplishment of these conditions. The election of a nation is in reality a universal benefit. To establish the proofs of this election, we refer to what we have before said

(p. 15) of the historical authority of the Mosaic history.

The decisive proofs of God's special choice of the Jewish people can be nothing less than the clear manifestation of His will, supported by a direct and sensible intervention of His power, that is to say, by MIRACLES. This word excites the anger and contempt of infidels; to listen to them, it is an evidence of a weak understanding to admit even the possibility of a miracle. God could not, therefore, according to them, communicate directly with man in such a manner as to render him certain of this communication? Instead of permitting second causes to act according to the properties which He Himself gave them, He could not produce an effect by the direct action of His sovereign power. His ordinary Providence would be an obstacle to the extraordinary action of the same Providence? For indeed a miracle is only that. According to St. Thomas a miracle is whatever is done outside of the order of all created nature (*Contra Gent.* iii. 101); and the true notion of a miracle is in perfect accord with sound philosophy. J. J. Rousseau has acknowledged this truth: "Can God work miracles? that is to say, can He deviate from the laws which He has established? This question seriously treated would be impious, were it not absurd. It would be too great an honor to punish him who answered this question in the negative, he should be confined.[1]

The pretended impossibilities urged by Voltaire

[1] *Lettre de la Montagne*, p. 94.

and other skeptics, rest upon a false conception of the attributes of God, and particularly of His immutability. St. Augustine answers them in a few words: *Deus opera mutat, non consilium.* The change is in the work, and not in the counsel of the Most High. Properly speaking, a miracle is not on the part of God a deviation from general laws, as it seems to be to our minds; the limited understanding of man must generalize, but God governs all things individually. "I despise those philosophers," says Bossuet, "who, measuring the counsels of God by the standard of their own thoughts, represent Him as the author of only a certain general order, from which everything else is developed, as it were, by chance. As if He, like ourselves, had only general and confused views, and as if His sovereign intelligence could not include in its designs particular things which alone truly subsist." [1]

Nothing is more true than that we must be on our guard against false miracles; in this respect, nothing equals the just severity of the holy Catholic Church, and there is nothing more clearly demonstrated than the miraculous facts upon which rests the Christian revelation. Therefore, without entering further upon the discussion of miracles in general, let us see in particular if God, in forming a nation of the Jews by the ministry of Moses, has signalized His intervention in such a manner as to exclude all doubt and possibility of error.

[1] *Or. fun. de Marie Thérèse d'Autriche.*

The ministry of Moses presents an unbroken succession of miracles; this is to be explained by the importance of his mission in the merciful designs of God upon the human race. It even seems that in order to prove more clearly this mission, and to give more authority to His miracles, God had made choice of a people unceasingly inclined to disregard His benefits, a stiff-necked people, as the sacred text declares. The history of this people is too well known to be cited here; we will proceed to the proofs by which Moses established his mission, and in the four following sections we shall select four kinds of miracles, each of which presents a special characteristic.

By the force of miracles alone, Moses overcame the obstinacy of Pharao. These miracles, known as the ten plagues of Egypt, are the more incontestable, inasmuch as they were placed in direct opposition to the enchantments of the magicians, who after several attempts acknowledged themselves vanquished, and rendered homage to the incomparable power of the true God. "*Digitus Dei est hic*," said they. "The finger of God is here." (Exodus viii. 9.)

Now by these public and striking exhibitions of His power, God desired in a formal manner to consecrate the ministry of Moses and to manifest the providential destiny of His people, as we learn from several passages in the first chapters of Exodus: "I *am* the Lord who will deliver you out of the work-prison of the Egyptians, and will deliver you from bondage; and redeem you with a high arm and

great judgments. And I will take you to Myself for My people; I will be your God," etc. (Exodus vi. 6, 7.) Deuteronomy (xxvi. 18) contains still more formal declarations.

The evidence of these miracles was so well established that in after years the chiefs of the nation, Josue, David, and the Machabees, constantly referred to them in order to recall the people to their duty and to confidence in God. Let us cite Josue (ch. xxiv.), who appeals to their own experience: "And I sent Moses and Aaron, and I struck Egypt with many signs and wonders. . . . . Your eyes saw all that I did in Egypt," etc.

The passage of the Red Sea surpasses all the preceding miracles in splendor. Infidels have labored in vain to weaken this proof of the divine intervention; all their objections are refuted in advance by the text of the sacred historian. The Israelites found themselves hemmed in between the mountains, the army of Pharao, and the Red Sea. Their route is clearly indicated (Exod. xiii. 20, xiv. 2), and is sufficiently well known at the present time to assign to the Red Sea in this place a breadth of from three to six leagues. Then Moses raised his hand, and the Israelites passed through the sea with dry feet, the waters being suspended on each side of them like a wall. (Exod. xiv. 22.)

The Egyptians followed them, and as soon as they had all entered this miraculous way, by a new order of Moses the waters return and overwhelm them, whilst the Israelites peaceably complete their pas-

sage through the suspended waters. Witnesses of so wonderful a miracle, the whole nation here recognized the hand of God, and upon the shores of the Red Sea a thousand tongues intoned the famous canticle: "*Cantemus Domino.*" We place before our readers a portion of the narrative that embraces the most important circumstances of this event:

"And when Moses had stretched forth his hand over the sea, the Lord took it away by a strong and burning wind blowing all the night, and turned it into dry ground; and the water was divided.

"And the children of Israel went in through the midst of the sea dried up: for the water was as a wall on their right hand and on their left.

"And the Egyptians, pursuing, went in after them, and all Pharao's horses, his chariots and horsemen, through the midst of the sea.

"And now the morning watch was come: and behold, the Lord looking upon the Egyptian army through the pillar of fire and of the cloud,[1] slew their host.

"And overthrew the wheels of their chariots, and they were carried into the deep. And the Egyptians said: Let us flee from Israel, for the Lord fighteth for them against us.

[1] This column or miraculous cloud, which became luminous during the night, preceded the Israelites constantly during their march through the desert.

"And the Lord went before them to show the way by day in a pillar of a cloud, and by night in a pillar of fire; that He might be the guide of their journey at both times.

"There never failed the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the

"And the Lord said to Moses: Stretch forth thy hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots and horsemen.

"And when Moses had stretched forth his hand toward the sea, it returned at the first break of day to the former place; and as the Egyptians were fleeing away, the waters came upon them, and the Lord shut them up in the middle of the waves.

"And the waters returned and covered the chariots and the horsemen of all the army of Pharao, who had come into the sea after them, neither did there so much as one of them remain.

"But the children of Israel marched through the midst of the sea upon dry land; and the waters were to them as a wall on the right hand and on the left.

"And the Lord delivered Israel that day out of the hands of the Egyptians.

"And they saw the Egyptians dead upon the seashore, and the mighty hand that the Lord had used against them; and the people feared the Lord; and they believed the Lord, and Moses His servant." (Exod. xiv. 21–31.)

If the miracles wrought during the forty years in the desert are less striking when considered as particular facts, they are more convincing from their duration. They were *permanent prodigies* on which

pillar of fire by night, before the people." (Exod. xiii. 21, 22.) The miracle of this cloud became still more sensible when it covered the ark which Moses constructed by the order of God. It stopped over the ark or went before it to give notice to the people when to stop or to advance. (Numbers ix. 17, etc.)

the witnesses could every day renew their observations and reflections. Such is the miracle of the *manna*, with which God constantly fed this immense multitude. To show distinctly the hand which conferred this benefit, the manna covered the earth every day in the morning except the Sabbath day; and whilst all the rest of the week it could not be preserved from one day to another, the supplementary provision of the sixth day lasted the next day without corruption. These details may be found in the sixteenth chapter of Exodus.

There is one thing which is perhaps still more wonderful; it is the provision which God inserted in the fundamental law of His people, which pledged Him to work a *periodical miracle*. In the twenty-fifth chapter of Leviticus they are commanded to let the earth rest during the seventh year, which for this reason was called the Sabbath year: "In the seventh year there shall be a Sabbath to the land, of the resting of the Lord; thou shalt not sow thy field nor prune thy vineyard." But is it not to be feared that there will be a scarcity of food in the seventh year, and especially in the eighth? God anticipates this objection and promises to provide for it by the prodigious abundance of a triple harvest during the sixth year. See this astonishing promise recorded in Leviticus xxv. 21, 22 and 23.

"But if you say: What shall we eat the seventh year, if we sow not nor gather our fruits? I will give you my blessing the sixth year, and it shall yield the fruit of three years. And the eighth year

you shall sow, and shall eat of the old fruits, until the ninth year; till new grow up, you shall eat the old store."

By an analogous provision inserted in Exodus (xxxiv. 23, 54), the whole male population are obliged to appear three times a year before the Lord. But during this time who will defend their territory against the numerous enemies ever ready to seize every occasion to attack the children of Israel? God Himself will keep them away: "No man shall lie in wait against thy land when thou shalt go up, and appear in the sight of the Lord thrice a year." What other lawgiver can speak in this manner?

The fame of so many miracles would naturally have been spread abroad, especially in the East. Asia transmitted the accounts to Greece, and here we find a feeble echo of the high renown of Moses, in clear and positive texts, which we may read in the works of Clement of Alexandria (*Stromata*, i. 6). More recently the miraculous facts of the life of Moses are again mentioned by pagan historians.[1] These writers under the sway of their prejudices, sought to diminish the importance of what they related, but their testimony carried more weight with it from this circumstance; it is a final homage to the memory of the ancient chief of the people of God.

To this historical evidence we might add the inductions of mythology. According to some writers,

[1] Tacitus, Hist. v. 3; Justin, 16; Diodorus, iii. 4, and xi. 3, etc.

fabulous history may be considered as a corruption of the true history of the people of God, and particularly of that of Moses. This system, adopted by the learned Huet, and by Guérin des Rochers, has retained perhaps a small number of adherents, especially among those who in our days have revised the whole history of the ancient mythologies. Notwithstanding the authority of these savants, we cannot but acknowledge that there are at least very curious analogies between certain fabulous accounts and the history of Moses. Compare, for example, this great chief with the Bacchus of the Greeks. "The ancient poets declare that Bacchus was born in Egypt; he was exposed upon the banks of the Nile, and from this circumstance he is named Mises by the first Orpheus, which means in ancient Egyptian, 'saved from the waters.' He was brought up on a mountain in Arabia named Nisa, which is supposed to have been Mt. Sinai. Some have pretended that a goddess ordered him to go and destroy a barbarous nation, that he crossed the Red Sea on foot with a multitude of men, women, and children. At another time the river Orontes suspended its waters on the right and left hand to let him pass. The Hydaspes did the same. He commanded the sun to stand still; two luminous rays issued from his head; he caused a fountain of wine to spring up by striking the earth with his thyrsus; he engraved his laws upon ten tables of marble; it only lacked the affliction of Egypt with ten plagues to make him the perfect copy of Moses." Thus Voltaire expresses him-

self in his *Questions sur l'Encyclopédie*, yet he did not tell all; the parallel is carried still further by Abbé Cayol in the *Histoire de la vraie Religion.*

These analogies are striking, without doubt; are they fortuitous, without connection with the real history of Moses? Whatever they may be, we draw no argument from them, since it would possess only a doubtful value, and our demonstration can easily dispense with it.

CHAPTER VIII.

POSITIVE DIVINE LAW.

THE providential destiny of the chosen people had two ends in view: the preservation and development of the promise of a Redeemer (we shall consider this point in the following chapter), and the maintenance of the true principles of religion and morality. In order to secure these two ends this privileged people required an exceptional organization. Therefore in the laws which governed them there were two *distinct parts:* one concerns all men and belongs to all times, the other relates to the Jewish people alone and is appropriate to the exceptional circumstances in which God placed them. Both attest the wisdom of the legislator and demonstrate the divinity of the religion of Moses.

The law established for the Jewish people is a masterpiece considered as a political constitution. This is acknowledged at the present time, and no one attempts to renew the attacks of Voltaire, so wittily refuted by Abbé Guénée in *les lettres de quelques Juifs.* Moreover, the inherent force of the Mosaic law is such that, without having undergone modification, it has proved adequate to all the situations of the Jewish people; and dispersed as they are at the present day, it maintains them in its unity.

"The legislator has regulated things so well that there was no need of changing anything. This is the reason that the Jewish code is not a summary of different laws made at different times and on different occasions. Moses enlightened by the spirit of God had foreseen everything." (Bossuet, *Hist. Univers.* ii.)

A detailed examination of the Mosaic law would carry us beyond the limits which we have assigned for our work. We will content ourselves with mentioning some of the more important points: —

I. The care taken to guard the people of God from the abominations of their neighbors by the prohibition of alliances, the dissimilarity of rites, etc.

II. The multiplicity of legal observances destined to preserve in their minds the remembrance of God and His benefits.

III. The spirit of fraternity which appeared especially in the guarantees of protection established in favor of widows, orphans, and even slaves.

IV. The admirable regulations for property and the precautions observed to prevent the inconveniences of the extreme inequality of fortunes by the *year of Jubilee*, etc.

V. The justice of the measures employed for the repression of crime. It is for this reason especially that M. Dupin, the younger (*étude du droit criminel*), recommends the study of the Hebrew legislation. "Their criminal instruction is admirable for the simplicity of its forms, for the combinations of its guarantees and for the humanity which pervades

it." "The criminal procedure of the Pentateuch," according to Dupin, the elder, "rests upon three rules which are comprised in these words: publicity of trials, complete liberty of defence for the accused, security from the dangers of testimony."

The Jewish code contains a part more august than these special laws to which it serves as a foundation: the *Decalogue*. The precepts of the Decalogue belong to the law of nature, that is, they spring from the nature of the relations of man with the Deity and with his equals. The love of God and of man; interior and exterior worship, the homage of the creature to his Creator; respect for the life, property, and honor of others: man from the beginning knew all these great duties, "he possessed the truth in his heart," says St. Augustine, "but he no longer read it in this interior of himself; God wrote it in material characters." "The time had come," says Bossuet, "when the truth, almost obliterated from the memory of man, could no longer be preserved without being written." God communicated therefore His law to Moses, and in order to give it more efficacy, He accompanied this communication with the most solemn and formidable preparations on Mount Sinai.

The sanctity of this law and the conformity of the whole Jewish code with it, distinguish the work of Moses from all pagan legislation. He alone proscribed all disorders contrary to the natural law. Everywhere else and even in nations that boasted of the highest civilization, particularly in Sparta, we find immoral and barbarous practices authorized by

the laws. Infidels have perceived the force of this contrast, and have omitted nothing to discover a flaw in the constitution of Moses. The failure of their efforts is another homage rendered to the Mosaic revelation. But to the Gospel alone was it reserved to conduct man to a higher perfection.

All legislators have confirmed their laws by imposing penalties proportioned to the transgressions. The sacred lawgiver did not confine himself to these measures; he added a sanction which God alone could have promised to his work. Behold this *divine sanction* The temporal prosperity of the nation will depend upon its fidelity to the law. "Behold, I set forth in your sight this day a blessing and a curse: A blessing, if you obey the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you this day: A curse, if you obey not the commandments of the Lord your God, but revolt from the way which now I show you, and walk after strange gods which you know not." (Deut. xi. 26, 27, 28.)

Every nation, as such, receives its reward or its punishment upon the earth. With the individual it is different. The Mosaic law was framed especially for the nation, *a stiff-necked nation*, which required temporal promises. On this ground may be explained the fact that it makes so little mention of the future life.

Moses refers many times to the promises and threats of God, and justifies them by the remembrance of past benefits, and by the proofs of His severity toward the wicked, such as Dathan and Abi-

ron; and in order to show more clearly the finger of God in advance, he enumerates the punishments which will gradually overtake His unfaithful people, from the privation of necessary rains to the dispersion of the nation. "And I will destroy your land, and your enemies shall be astonished at it when they shall be the inhabitants thereof.

"And I will scatter you among the gentiles; and will draw out the sword after you; and your land shall be desert, and your cities destroyed." (Levit. xxvi. 32, 33.)

And again: "The Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the farthest parts of the earth to the ends thereof. . . . .

"Neither shalt thou be quiet, even in those nations, nor shall there be any rest for the sole of thy foot." (Deut. xxviii. 64, 65.)

In fact, the history of the people of God presents a continued alternation of signal benefits and exemplary chastisements; and these vicissitudes correspond so exactly with the conduct of the nation, that the neighboring nations were accustomed to regulate their hopes and fears thereby. When Holofernes besieged Bethulia, Achior, chief of the Ammonites, had the courage to tell him that the success of his arms would depend only upon the disposition of the true God toward His people; and that if they had no iniquity to expiate, he would attack them in vain, and would gain only reproach from the attempt. You will find this discourse in the fifth chapter of the book of Judith. Let us remark that the dispersion

of the children of Israel was in the designs of God a means of making Himself known among pagan nations. Nebuchodonosor, Darius, and Cyrus in turn rendered homage to the true God, subsisting in all ages. (Dan. iii. and iv.)

The *perpetual miracle* of the special Providence of God over the Jewish people, still subsists and we shall refer to it again.

CHAPTER IX.

EXPLICIT PROMISE OF THE EXPECTED REDEEMER.

THE principal end of the Law is Christ, *Finis Legis Christus*. (1 Cor. x. 4.) By these beautiful words the Apostle not only instructs the first Christians; but he expresses exactly the dominant idea among the children of Israel. They regarded themselves as the depositaries of this grand promise; they gloried in styling themselves the race which would one day give birth to the Messias; to this august privilege were all their institutions referred. The very existence of this people proclaimed better than any monument the promise of a Redeemer, and the miracles wrought in their favor establish equally the truth of this promise, and consequently its realization in the future. Either God did not choose the Jewish people, or He chose them to prepare for the coming of the Messias.

If we have not hitherto mentioned the promises made to the Patriarchs who preceded Moses, we have justified them in advance by the prodigies which confirmed the definitive constitution of the people of God; in this manner we have laid the foundation of a solid demonstration. Let us now return to the pages of Genesis and see the magnificent promises which announce the salvation of the world.

The terms of these promises are very explicit, and the accompanying circumstances are of the highest importance.

I. Abraham was the first that received the assurance that the Messias would spring from his race: "In thee all nations shall be blessed," said the Lord to him. (Gen. xii.) This glorious privilege was the reward of his fidelity in following the divine vocation. From this time also God favored him with His most intimate communications. When He had resolved to punish the crimes of Sodom, He imparted His design to the faithful Abraham: "Can I conceal My design," said the Lord, "from him in whom all the nations of the earth shall be blessed." (Gen. xviii. 18.) But it was in recompense of the heroic obedience of His servant that God ratified His alliance with him in the most solemn manner. "By My Own Self have I sworn, saith the Lord: because thou hast done this thing, and hast not spared thy only begotten son for My sake: I will bless thee, and I will multiply thy seed as the stars of heaven, and as the sand that is by the sea-shore: thy seed shall possess the gates of their enemies. And in thy seed shall the nations of the earth be blessed, because thou hast obeyed my voice." (Gen. xxii. 16, 17, 18.)

II. Isaac was the son of the rightful wife, the son of promise, as St. Paul expresses himself (Gal. iv.), he in whom the blessed race was to be perpetuated, according to this word of the Lord: "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." (Gen. xxi. 12.) God deigned to confirm to him the promises made to the father of the faithful. (Gen. xxvi. 4.)

III. Jacob had received the paternal blessing of which Esau his elder brother had rendered himself unworthy. In a mysterious dream God renewed His promises to him, and announced the extension which He was about to give his posterity. "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and of Isaac: the land whereon thou sleepest I will give to thee and to thy seed:

"And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth: thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and thy seed all the tribes of the earth shall be blessed." (Gen. xxviii. 13, 14.)

IV. Jacob in his turn bequeaths the special benediction. He called his children together, and assuming a solemn tone: "Gather yourselves together, sons of Jacob; learn your destinies from the mouth of Israel your father." Who will receive the august inheritance of the divine promise? Reuben is the eldest, but he is rejected on account of his incontinence: Simeon and Levi, next in age, experience the same lot on account of their cruelty. "*Juda*, thee shall thy brethren praise: thy hands shall be on the necks of thy enemies: the sons of thy father shall bow down to thee. . . . . The sceptre [the sign of authority] shall not be taken away from Juda, nor a ruler from his thigh, till *He* come that is to be sent, and He shall be the expectation of nations." (Gen. xlix. 8, 10.)

While awaiting more detailed prophecies, these texts furnish us with three prophetic circumstances:

I. The Messias will spring from the tribe of Juda; but not

II. Before the Jewish nation shall be deprived of all political authority. (It is thus that the prophecy of Jacob is generally interpreted. It was evidently accomplished at the accession of Herod, a foreign ruler imposed by Augustus.)

III. The Messias will be expected by all the nations of the earth.

It is to justify these promises and to render their accomplishment incontestable that God, by the ministry of Moses, assumes the direction of His people as we have seen, and places them as a shining beacon in the midst of idolatrous nations.

CHAPTER X.

FIGURES OF THE FUTURE REDEEMER.

The Jewish people were assured of the reality and grandeur of the promises of God, and they possessed a constitution wonderfully appropriate to their sublime destinies. This was not enough: God desired that the future Redeemer should be continually present to their minds, and that this image should be impressed upon their imagination by everything that surrounded them. "It was necessary," according to St. Jerome, "that their eyes as well as their ears should unite in conveying to them this important knowledge." (*Com. in Jerem.*)

By acting thus, divine Wisdom, ever mild and condescending in its ways, conformed itself to the genius of its people, and in general of all the peoples of the East. This is the reason why the holy Scriptures, like the profane writings of those countries, abound in *figures* and *symbols:* they are the distinguishing mark of the oriental style. When the prophet Ahias wished to express in a sensible manner the division which was to take place among the tribes of Israel, he tore his cloak in twelve pieces and gave ten to Jeroboam who was to reign over the ten tribes. (3 Kings xi.) There are a thousand facts of this class.

Taken separately, the figures and symbols which relate to the Messias do not furnish so logical a foundation that we can deduce from them the truth of the Christian Revelation; but they complete the demonstration which we derive from the miracles and prophecies.

We will first consider the persons who were the living types of the Messias.

I. Is not young Isaac, the only son, ready to die upon the altar, by the hand of his father, a very striking image of the Son of God, delivered to death by His heavenly Father? Does not this voluntary submission of the innocent boy designate in a very lively manner Him who was obedient even to the death of the cross? Is not Isaac bearing the wood for his sacrifice, a true representation of Jesus carrying His cross? And is it not a remarkable circumstance that this act is closely connected with the solemn promise of the future redemption?

II. Who can deny the resemblance of Joseph to the Saviour of the world? Both, notwithstanding their innocence, are persecuted, betrayed, sold for a few pieces of silver, associated with two criminals, one of whom owes his salvation to them; and finally they are elevated to the highest point of glory, with the title of Saviour, Joseph after three years imprisonment, Jesus the third day after His death.

III. Moses, the savior and legislator of his people represents two grand aspects in the character of the Messias: it is a unique type, and the Scripture remarks, or rather predicts, that after him, no prophet

shall arise equal to Moses. (Deut. xxxiv. 10.) This resemblance was reserved for the Messias, and Moses himself announced in the name of God: "The Lord thy God will raise up to thee a prophet of thy nation and thy brethren like unto thee: him thou shalt hear." (Deut. xviii. 15.)

IV. Many other types will yet be presented to the Jewish people, and in order to assist them to make a proper application of them, David and the prophets will sing these allegories in divine canticles. Thus in Psalm cix. Christ is designated as a priest according to the order of *Melchisedec*. Melchisedec is that priest of the Most High, who, by a very remarkable exception, offers to God a sacrifice of bread and wine (Gen. xiv.), a striking symbol of the august sacrifice of our altars. St. Paul penetrates still further into this mystical type, and in his divine Epistle to the Hebrews he calls attention to the following circumstances: Melchisedec signifies *King of justice*, and he is called King of Salem, that is, of peace; he appears in Scripture without father, without mother, without genealogy; we see neither the beginning nor the end of his days — image of the eternal priesthood of the Son of God; finally he is above Abraham himself, since he blesses him and receives from him the homage of tithes.

The entire history of the people of God is a succession of figurative events, and this typical character is principally displayed in the wonderful facts of their emancipation and establishment in the promised land. Here everything represents to us the deliverance of

the human race and the new covenant of the children of God. "All these things happened to them in figure." (1 Cor. x. 11.) Let us cite a few examples:

I. *The Paschal Lamb*, a lamb without blemish, whose blood saved the children of Israel, is a remarkable figure of the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world, according to the expression of St. John the Baptist; and who immolates Himself for the salvation of men, according to the prophets. Even the eating of the Paschal Lamb offers several allegorical circumstances which are described by Moses in the twelfth chapter of Exodus.

II. *The Manna*, "that bread of heaven, that food of Angels, suiting all tastes," according to the explanation of the Book of Wisdom, is a very sensible though imperfect image of the divine banquet of the New Law.

"No," said Jesus Himself to the Jews (John vi.), "Moses gave you not bread from heaven [for the manna was only a figure]; but My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world. . . . I am the bread of life. If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever; and the bread which I will give is my flesh for the life of the world. . . . For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed." Admirable words, which under another point of view and against modern heretics, possess an importance which no one will deny.

III. *The Brazen Serpent* which Moses set up in

the midst of the Israelites, the sight of which cured the bites of serpents (Num. xxi. 9), admirably represents the cross which cures the bites of the infernal serpent. Jesus recalls this figure when He predicts His death to Nicodemus: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of Man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting." (John iii. 14, 15.)

In order to perpetuate in the eyes of the people the figurative language of these facts, Moses, by the command of God, makes them the foundation of their *institutions*, especially of their religious institutions. "The whole administration of this people," says St. Augustine, "was but a perpetual prophecy of the King whom they expected." Thus the Pasch, in memory of the going out of Egypt; the Pentecost, in memory of the Law given on Mount Sinai; the Feast of the Tabernacles, in memory of their long continued wanderings through the desert, and all the principal feasts possessed the double advantage of constantly exciting the gratitude of the people toward God and of renewing in their minds the expectation of the promised Saviour.

The simplest religious ceremonies were impressed with the same typical character, and St. Paul has explained a portion of them in his Epistle to the Hebrews, where he develops in an admirable manner the ideas of the priesthood and sacrifice. To cite an example: among the numerous victims ordained by

the Law, there is one which presents a striking similarity with *Him* Whom God loaded with all our iniquities, according to Isaias: it is the *emissary goat*, thus called, because, after having loaded it with curses, they drove it into the desert.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PROPHETS OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD.

HITHERTO our discussion has rarely passed beyond the examination of the facts recorded in the Pentateuch: we shall now consult the other books of the old Testament; these are:

I. The historical books which contain the administration of Josue, of the Judges, of Samuel, of the Kings (with the supplement called Paralipomenon), of Esdras, and of the Machabees.

II. The books containing the episodes of Job, Ruth, Tobias, Judith, and Esther.

III. The moral books — Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom, and Ecclesiasticus.

IV. The Psalms of David, the allegorical Canticle of Canticles, the prophecies of Isaias, Jeremias, Baruch, Ezechiel, Daniel, and of the twelve minor prophets: Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophonias, Aggeus, Zacharias, and Malachias.

Independently of the religious motives which attach us to these sacred treasures, these books are of deep interest to every man who aspires to any pretension of knowledge. The history of the people of God is here presented with a noble simplicity which adds to the effect of the grave teachings with which

they abound; the episodes are finished works of their class; the moral lessons bear the impress of the spirit of God; the Psalms and the writings of the prophets for elevation and vigor defy all comparison.

The veracity and integrity of these books are supported not only by the arguments which we have adduced in favor of the Pentateuch, but also by the authority which the synagogue acquired by the miracles performed in the establishment of the constitution of the people of God. Let us add that, among all the books which formed this sacred deposit, those which excited the most lively interest and whose preservation was particularly dear to this people, were the writings which had a particular reference to the promised Messias, those which portrayed in advance the circumstances of His coming; in a word, the *prophecies*. This is the part which we shall now examine: it will serve as a foundation to the principal conclusion of this treatise.

Assured of the authenticity of the documents upon which we rely, are we equally certain of the *logical value* of a demonstration that rests upon the prophecies? In other words, do the prophecies prove the intervention of the Deity, and does the object in favor of which they are made receive the divine sanction? To answer this question it is sufficient to remark that a true prophecy is the clear and certain prediction of a fact which cannot be foreseen in any existing cause, and which, consequently, requires on the part of the prophet a clear and certain view of the future.

In reality, the future can only be known in itself or from its causes; if it is known from its causes, as we know in advance the rising of the sun, the prediction has no value; if it can in no manner be known from its causes, if it depends, for example, on the determination of a free will, or on a concurrence of circumstances impossible to be foreseen, the prediction requires a direct knowledge of the future. But the future is not an object of possible knowledge to any finite being, whose existence is measured by time; the Eternal alone embraces all times, He alone sees the future as He sees the present and the past, He alone can communicate this view to men who are therefore justly called *Seers*, according to the expression of the sacred writings. This knowledge of the future is, in relation to us, foreknowledge; but with God, the eternal Intelligence, it is a clear and direct view of all things, a view which can in no way impair human liberty. I do not perform a certain act, because God has willed it, but all that I do God *sees eternally*.

Prophecy has therefore for its foundation the most essential attributes of the Deity. "The prophetic voice has," according to St. Augustine (Serm. 43), "to convince unbelievers, something more powerful than even the voice that descends from heaven." False prophecies, which in all ages have gained dupes, should make us prudent and reserved, but they should not cause us to deny those which God has clothed with unquestionable authority, especially those whose light reflects so brilliantly upon the divine Author of the Catholic Church.

Everything is not prophecy in the writings of the prophets of the old law. Extraordinary messengers from God to the ordinary chiefs of the chosen people, these great men were also the preachers of their epoch, and in this capacity they have transmitted to us masterpieces of religious eloquence. Their discourses embrace the present and the future with equal certainty. Their predictions do not even relate exclusively to the Messias; there are others which it is important to make known first of all.

CHAPTER XII.

DIFFERENT PREDICTIONS OF THE ANCIENT PROPHETS.

Every prophecy is justified by its accomplishment; consequently, the authority of the prophets is completely established only by the *verification of the events predicted*. But if these are to be accomplished at a remote period, how will the contemporaries of the prophet be able to recognize the prophetic character of his words? In this case he must prove his divine mission, either by evident miracles, or by other prophecies whose accomplishment will take place in a shorter period. This was done by the prophets who predicted the circumstances of the coming of the Saviour of the world. Unable to appeal to their contemporaries for the verification of these prophecies, they had recourse to other predictions that were accomplished soon after, often in a miraculous manner, as we shall prove directly.

These predictions, which may be called *secondary*, are of less importance to us who have seen the accomplishment of the principal prophecies concerning the Messias; nevertheless they are to us now, no less than to the Jews then, proofs of incontestable value. Relying on these proofs we shall say that he ought to be considered the Messias, who shall realize in his person all that the prophets announced: more-

over, enlightened by the event which reveals to us in Jesus Christ the Saviour whom they portrayed with so much care, we shall proceed to the consideration of the ancient prophecies with a firmer and deeper conviction.

Considered in this manner and taken as a whole, the prophecies comprise one of the most beautiful portions of the Christian revelation and an unanswerable demonstration of the faith in Jesus Christ.

We will now point out several prophecies whose accomplishment was verified during the epoch or soon after the epoch in which they were made. We pass over the prophecies of Elias, Eliseus, and other prophets who have left no writings, and confine ourselves to those whom we shall have especially to consult upon the Messias.

I. Sennacherib, king of Assyria, appeared at the gates of Jerusalem with a powerful army, resolved to bring it under his dominion. All human succor seemed impossible, and Ezechias, king of Juda, had no longer any hope but in God.

Isaias predicts his deliverance in these words: "Wherefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of the Assyrians: He shall not enter this city, nor shoot an arrow into it, nor come before it with a shield, nor cast a trench about it. By the way that he came, he shall return." And the same day, the angel of the Lord slew in their camp one hundred and eighty-five thousand Assyrians; Sennacherib retired and perished by the hands of his sons. (4 Kings xix. and Isaias xxxvii. 33.)

II. Ezechias, seeing himself about to die, begged God to prolong his days. Isaias came and said to him: "Thus saith the Lord God of David thy father: I have heard thy prayer, and I have seen thy tears: behold, I will add to thy days fifteen years. And to give you a certain sign, I will bring the shadow of the sun-dial ten lines backward." In testimony of the miraculous accomplishment of this prophecy, Ezechias pronounced the celebrated canticle: "*Ego dixi in dimidio dierum meorum.* . . . (Isaias xxxviii. and 4 Kings xx.)

III. The kingdom of Israel, or Samaria, formed of the ten tribes who had revolted from the successors of Solomon, disturbed by frequent incursions the kingdom of Juda. In a similar circumstance Isaias reassured king Achaz, and, addressing with solemnity the whole house of David, made the following remarkable prophecy: "Within three score and five years, Ephraim (that is to say the kingdom of Israel designated by one of its tribes) shall cease to be a people." (Isaias vii. 8.)

This prophecy, confirmed also by other prodigies, was verified by the conquest of Salmanasar and Assaradon.

IV. All the grand political changes, having a connection more or less direct with the destinies of the people of God, have been foretold by the prophets. Several chapters of Isaias are filled with the decrees of divine justice against Babylon, Moab, Damascus, Egypt, Tyre, etc. But no event of this nature was

predicted with more care than the captivity of the people of God at Babylon.

In the fourth year of the reign of Joachim, king of Juda, which was the first of the reign of Nabuchodonosor (this date is given in the prophecy itself), Jeremias, after having reproached the people for their obstinacy in sin, describes in this precise manner the duration of their punishment:

"I will bring against you and against your neighbors, saith the Lord, Nabuchodonosor, my servant [that is to say the instrument of my justice]. I will destroy them, and make their country a desert. . . . And all these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And when the seventy years shall be expired, I will punish the king of Babylon." (Jeremias xxv. 11, 12.)

And further on: "They shall serve him (Nabuchodonosor) and his son, and his son's son, till that time come." (Jeremias xxvii. 7.)

The years of captivity are reckoned from the first carrying away of the Jews, in the year 608 before Jesus Christ; but those who had been left at Jerusalem not having become more submissive to God, Jeremias announced to them on every occasion the continuation and increase of their punishment: "I will give all Juda, saith the Lord, into the hands of the king of Babylon, and he shall carry them away to Babylon; with all their treasures and with all the fruit of their labor. . . . . But thou, Phassar," said the prophet to the high-priest who had insulted him,

"and all that dwell in thy house, shalt go into captivity; thou shalt go to Babylon, and there thou shalt die, and there thou shalt be buried, thou and all thy friends, to whom thou hast prophesied a lie." (Jeremias xx. 4, 5, 6.) And again: "I will deliver Sedecias, king of Juda, and his servants, and his people, and such as are left in the city from the pestilence, the sword, and the famine, into the hands of Nabuchodonosor, who shall treat them without mercy." (Jeremias xxi. 7.) "The vessels also, that are left in the house of the Lord and in the house of the king, shall be carried to Babylon; and there they shall remain until the day of the punishment reserved to the guilty city; and I will cause them to be restored in this place, saith the Lord." (Jeremias xxvii. 21, 22.)

V. *The deliverance of the Jews* is closely connected in the prophecies of Jeremias with the details of the captivity: "When the seventy years shall begin to be accomplished in Babylon, I will visit you in my mercy, and bring you back to your country." (Jeremias xxix. 10.)

VI. The celebrated prophecy of Isaias concerning the *liberator of his people*, is still more remarkable, although it could not, like the preceding, be verified by the contemporaries of the prophet. Here is what he writes about two hundred years before the event: "I am the Lord that make all things, saith the Lord, that alone stretch out the heavens, that establish the earth. . . . . I am the Lord who say to Jerusalem thou shalt be inhabited; and to the cities of Juda:

You shall be built. . . . . Who say to Cyrus, thou art my shepherd, and thou shalt perform all of my pleasure. . . . . I shall take hold of thy right hand, to subdue nations before thy face, and to turn the backs of kings, and to open the doors before him; and the gates shall not be shut. . . . . For the sake of my servant Jacob, I have even called thee by thy name: I have formed thee, although thou hast not known me." (Isaias xliv., xlv.)

VII. The prophet named the chief, he names also the people who will destroy the empire of the Assyrians: "I will arm the Medes against them, who shall not seek silver, nor desire gold, but with their arrows they shall kill the children." (Is. xiii. 17, 18.) Then he traces the picture of the ruin of Babylon (chap. xiii.) which Jeremias will afterward complete by details which seem already to belong to history. (Jeremias l.) "The avenging nation will come from the north, a powerful nation aïded by several kings (Jeremias l. 41). They are the chiefs of the Medes [observe the details of the capture of Babylon]: They will be surprised, and the couriers one after another will announce to the king of Babylon that his whole city is in the hands of the enemy, that the water-courses are seized, the ditches dried up and the defenders of the city affrighted." (Jeremias li. 31, 32.) Read the histories and you will see that everything is verified to the letter.

VIII. Miracles and prophecies continued to render the people of God famous during their captivity: it was the design of God to illumine the eyes of the

idolaters with the light of the truths of which he had made this people the depositary. The kings of Babylon were struck with them: *the deliverance of the three young Jews* who were preserved from injury in the fiery furnace, and the *prophetical* interpretation of the dream which announced to Nabuchodonosor his astonishing transformation, extorted from this prince the public acknowledgment of the sovereign power of the true God. (Daniel iii. and iv.) Under Darius the miracle which saved *Daniel in the lions' den* produced the same result. (Daniel vi.)

IX. The celebrated predictions concerning the nations who were successively to rule the world, are given by Daniel, at one time in explanation of a dream of Nabuchodonosor (Daniel ii.), at another time under the figure of four animals of which God gives him the explanation. "The ram is the king of the Medes and Persians; the he-goat which throws itself with irresistible impetuosity upon the ram, is the king of the Greeks, and the great horn that was between his eyes is their first king. Under the horn and in its place rise four other horns which designate four kings who will succeed him without equalling his power. After several reigns a king will appear without shame, who will persecute the people of the saints." (Daniel viii.) Can any one designate better the conquests of Alexander and the reigns of his successors until the hateful Antiochus? The prophet then enters into details which resemble a historical summary of the future. Here is the passage which relates to the reign of Alexander:

"Behold, there shall yet stand three kings in Persia: and the fourth shall be enriched exceedingly above them all: and when he shall be grown mighty by his riches, he shall stir up all against the kingdom of Greece.

"But there shall rise up a strong king, and he shall rule with great power: and he shall do what he pleaseth.

"And when he shall come to his height, his kingdom shall be broken: and it shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven: but not to his posterity, nor according to his power with which he ruled. For his kingdom shall be rent in pieces, even for strangers, beside these." (Daniel vi. 2, 3, 4.)

Among the predictions which illustrate in a striking manner the divine mission of the prophets, and establish on a firm basis the authority of God over His people, there are some whose accomplishment constitutes a *permanent fact*, continually exposed to the investigations of all nations. The most fertile countries of the East are to-day in the state of desolation predicted by the prophets, and we have for eye-witnesses of the fact the declared enemies of Christianity. Cities turned into solitudes and fortresses into haunts of wild beasts, fields laid waste and their profits absorbed by foreign nations, brigandage organized and sustained by princes, abandoned roads, harbors choked up, ruins, briers and thorns everywhere; such is the picture of a country once so flourishing; and upon all these details Isaias and Volney hold the same language. The infidel trav-

eler has reproduced to the letter the words of the prophet, not only upon general facts, but also upon the most important details.[1]

We can judge of their conformity by the following comparisons:

THE PROPHET.	THE TRAVELER.
Behold what the Lord God says to those who inhabit Jerusalem: they shall eat their bread in trouble and shall drink their water in desolation.	The merchant lives in perpetual alarms. . . The same fear prevails in the villages, where every peasant dreads to excite the envy of his neighbors and the cupidity of the *aga*, and of the soldiers. (VOLNEY, *Voyage* 32.)
The mirth of the timbrels has ceased: the noise of them that rejoiced is ended; the melody of the harp is silent. (Isaias xxiv. 8.)	All their music is vocal: they neither know nor esteem the practice on instruments. . . . Their expression is accompanied with sighs. . . . We may say that they excel in melancholy music. (Ibid, 39.)
They shall not drink wine with a song. (Isaias xxiv. 9.)	Good cheer would draw upon them an insult, and wine a corporal punishment. (Ibid, 40.)
I will destroy your land, and your enemies shall be astonished at it, when they shall be the inhabitants thereof. (Lev. xxvi. 32.)	One may well be astonished at a report of a population so small in a country so excellent, but one would be more astonished if he compared the present with the population of ancient times. (Ibid, 32.)

[1] Isaias xxiv. etc. Jeremias xxviii. etc.: Volney, *Ruins* II. and *Voyage en Syrie*, 31, etc.

And the strangers that shall come from afar, ... and all the nations shall say: Why hath the Lord done thus to this land? What meaneth this exceeding great heat of His wrath? And they shall answer: Because they forsook the covenant of the Lord. (Deut. xxix. 22–25.)

I have traveled through it, this ravaged land: Great God! Whence came revolutions so fatal? By what causes has the fortune of these countries changed so much? Why have so many cities been destroyed? Why has not this ancient population reproduced and perpetuated itself? Why are those lands deprived of their ancient benefit. . . . (RUINES II, *Voyage* 40.)

In presence of the ruins of Tyre, one would say that in spite of his prejudices the traveler felt himself shaken by the remembrance of the sublime prophecy of Ezechiel (xxviii); he cites this *historical fragment*, as he calls it, and then adds: "The revolution of fate or rather the barbarity of the Greeks of the Lower Empire and of the Mussulmans have accomplished this oracle." (Voyage 29.) "It seems," says another traveler (Maundrell), "that these ruins have been preserved as a visible proof of the accomplishment of the divine word: *I will make thee like a naked rock; thou shalt be a drying place for the nets of fishermen.*" (Ezechiel xxvi. 14.) "Curiosity," says J. Bruce, "induced me to go to Tyre, and I became the sad witness of the truth of the prophecies. . . . Two poor fishermen having caught several fish, came to stretch their nets upon the rocks of Tyre." All the rest of this opulent city is covered by the waves of the sea, as it had been predicted.

"There is one fact," says a pious pilgrim,[1] "which impiety will never explain and can never destroy: it is the existence of the prophecies, before the realization of the events predicted, and the material and ever subsisting proofs of their accomplishment."

[1] Mgr. Mislin, in his interesting work: *Les Saints Lieux.*

CHAPTER XIII.

GRAND PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE MESSIAS.

We come at length to the principal object of the ancient prophecies, which was at the same time the object of the most ardent desires of these inspired men: *The Messias. To what epoch* is reserved the happiness of possessing Him? *To what family* is promised the glorious privilege of giving Him birth? *What city* can boast of such renown? *By what signs* will He be recognized? *What great works* will illustrate His career? All these questions are answered by the prophecies in a very clear and, often, very detailed manner. We shall consider chiefly the most important circumstances.

When will the Saviour appear?

I. According to the prophecy of Jacob which we have already cited, the desired of nations, He who is to be sent, will appear before the sceptre shall be taken away from Juda, that is before the final extinction of the national sovereignty.

II. The Saviour will visit the second temple of Jerusalem, that which was rebuilt by the order of Cyrus and which the old men with grief compared to the temple of Solomon. "It is true," said the prophet Aggeus to them, "that this temple in comparison with that is as nothing in your eyes; and I

will move all nations, saith the Lord, and the desired of nations shall come, and I will fill this house with glory. . . . Yes the glory of the last house shall be greater than the glory of the first: and in this place I will give peace." (Aggeus ii. 8, 10.)

The prophet Malachias giving the same assurance, adds this remarkable circumstance of the precursor of the Messias: "Behold, I send my Angel, and he shall prepare the way before my face; and presently the Lord whom you seek, and the Angel of the Testament (Mediator) whom you desire shall come to the temple: Behold, he cometh, saith the Lord of hosts." (Malachias iii. 1.)

Therefore the Saviour will be born *before* the destruction of the second temple and immediately after the precursor who was to prepare the people for this wonder.

III. Finally, the celebrated prophecy of Daniel fixes the coming of the Messias in the *seventieth week of years* (four hundred ninety years)[1] from the going forth of the word to rebuild Jerusalem. This edict was published by Artaxerxes Longimanus, in the twentieth year of his reign, about the year three hundred of Rome. Cyrus had permitted the reconstruction of *the temple*. Artaxerxes included *the walls and the places of the city*.[2]

[1] It is clearly seen from the context that it does not mean weeks of days. Besides, the week of years was in use among the Jews, and even legally established, as may be seen in Leviticus xxv. 8.

[2] 2 Esdras 2; Eccles. xlix.

The angel Gabriel who made this communication to the holy prophet, did not content himself with fixing the date of the grand event, he traces its history with a master hand and divides the seventy weeks:

I. Seven, which are given to the building of Jerusalem in the *troubled times;*

II. Sixty-two, after which Christ will be put to death;

III. And *a last* week which will see the accomplishment of the promises and the establishment of a new covenant. After the latter half of this week, the ancient worship will have no more sacrifices, and the deicide people will be punished by a foreign nation. After that will take place the destruction of the city and sanctuary and an irretrievable desolation. See this remarkable passage:

"And I [Gabriel] am come to show it to thee because thou art a man of desires: therefore do thou mark the word and understand the vision.

"Seventy weeks are shortened upon thy people, and upon thy holy city, that transgression may be finished, and sin may have an end, and iniquity may be abolished; and everlasting justice may be brought; and vision and prophecy may be fulfilled; and the Saint of saints may be anointed.

"Know thou therefore, and take notice: *that* from the going forth of the word, to build up Jerusalem again, unto Christ the prince, there shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks: and the street shall be built again, and the walls in straitness of times.

"And after sixty-two weeks Christ shall be slain:

and the people that shall deny Him shall not be His. And a people with their leader that shall come, shall destroy the city and the sanctuary: and the end thereof shall be waste; and after the end of the war the appointed desolation.

"And He shall confirm the covenant with many in one week: and in the half of the week the victim and the sacrifice shall fail: and there shall be in the temple the abomination of desolation: and the desolation shall continue even to the consummation, and to the end." (Daniel ix. 23–27.)

Of whom will the Saviour be born?

I. The promises made to the patriarchs were renewed to David the son of Jesse on so many occasions, that it became the custom to personify in this holy king all the glory of his race and to designate the Messias by the expression, *son of David*, sometimes by that of David alone. "What is your belief concerning the Christ?" said Jesus one day to the Pharisees, "whose son is He?" "The son of David," they replied. "Such is the covenant that I have made with My elect, saith the Lord, such is the oath that I have sworn to My servant David: I will give to thy seed an empire without end." (2 Kings vii.; Psalm lxxxviii. etc.) "I will give him a son who will save Israel, who will execute justice and who will be called the Lord (Jehovah) our just one." (Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.) "And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him. . . . Then the lion shall dwell with

the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the kid. . . . And the rod of Jesse shall be set up as a standard before all nations; Him the gentiles shall beseech, and His sepulchre shall be glorious." (Isaias xi.) "But they shall serve the Lord their God and David their king, whom I shall raise up to them." (Jer. xxx. 9.) "And David My servant shall be their prince forever." (Ezech. xxxvii. 25.)

II. And who shall be the privileged *Mother* of this divine David? "Behold," says Isaias, "the prodigy which God Himself shall display in your midst: *The Virgin*[1] shall conceive and bear a son; and his name shall be called Emmanuel," (Isaias vii. 14) that is to say, God with us.

Where will the Saviour be born?

To this question proposed by Herod, the rulers of the Synagogue replied without hesitation: "At Bethlehem of the tribe of Juda;" and they proved their reply by the formal prediction of Micheas v. 2, as follows:

"*And thou Bethlehem* Ephrata [so called to distinguish it from another Bethlehem outside of Juda], art a little one among the thousands of Juda: out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be the ruler in Israel: and His going forth is from the

[1] Upon the acceptation of the Hebrew word which here designates the virgin by preëminence, see the learned dissertation of Drach, in his *troisième Lettre d'un rabbin converti.* The definite article *the* is found in the Hebrew text as well as in the Greek version. "The prophet here speaks," says St. John Chrysostom, "of the only *Virgin* [ἡ παρθένος] that has been announced to us."

beginning, from the days of eternity." To show still more clearly that this ruler, this eternal son, is the same child predicted by Isaias, the prophet continues: "Therefore will he give them up *even till the time wherein she that travaileth* shall bring forth: and the remnant of his brethren shall be converted to the children of Israel. And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord . . . . and he shall be their peace." It is at the stable of Bethlehem that the hymn of *peace* shall be intoned by the angels.

By what signs will He be recognized?

He will not be satisfied with realizing the thousand details of the prophecies that concern Him. His omnipotence will be shown by prodigies without number. "The wilderness shall rejoice," exclaims Isaias in one of his divine canticles, "and shall flourish like the lily. The glory of Libanus is given to it; the beauty of Carmel. Say to the faint-hearted: Take courage! behold your God will bring the revenge of recompense; God Himself will come, and will save you." And how will He manifest His presence? The prophet continues: "Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened; and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart; and the tongue of the dumb shall be free." (Isaias xxxv.)

Six hundred years afterward the disciples of the precursor asked of Jesus: Are you the Messias? And Jesus answered them by the prophecy of Isaias: "Go and relate to John what you have heard and seen: the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are

cleansed, the dead rise again, the poor have the gospel preached to them." (Matt. xi.)

For *what works* will He be distinguished?

We shall detail them hereafter: we will now confine our attention to the prophecies which characterize His works as a whole, and which are the more remarkable in as much as they are in opposition to the ideas received among the children of Israel.

I. The essential work of the Messias, *the redemption of man*, is presented by the prophets at one time as an act of irresistible power, and at another time as the immolation of feebleness itself. Now *the Saviour* is a glorious and invincible king upon his throne,[1] again He is the most abject of men, the outcast of the people, delivered up to torments and death.[2] The event will reconcile the two parts of this apparent contradiction; thus far it is a mystery, particularly to the Jews who aspired to temporal grandeur, and who (a circumstance predicted by Osee ch. iii.) prepared themselves for a long obstinacy.

II. As *legislator*, the Messias was to substitute a *new covenant* for the old. "The day shall come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, a covenant different from the one that I made with their ancestors, when I brought them out of Egypt."[3] It is this covenant

[1] Ps. ii. lxxxviii. etc.; Isaias ix., xvi. etc.

[2] Ps. xxi.; Isaias lii. etc.

[3] Jeremias xxxi.

that the Messias was to conclude and confirm according to the words of Daniel which we have cited.

III. The new covenant will not be confined to a single people: it will embrace *all nations*. The last chapters of Isaias, are full of the wonders which were to be wrought among the gentiles. The prophet sees first the rich messengers from the East who come to lay gold and frankincense at the Saviour's feet (ch. lx.); afterward the whole West is moved at the voice of the messengers of the good news. "For thus saith the Lord: Behold, I will bring upon Jerusalem as it were a river of peace; I will diffuse over her the glory of the nations as an overflowing torrent." How shall this wonder be wrought? He explains it a little further on: "And I will set a sign among them, and I will send of them, that shall be saved, to the gentiles into the sea, into Africa, and Lydia, them that draw the bow; into Italy and Greece, to the islands afar off, to them that have not heard of Me, and have not seen My glory. And they shall declare My glory to the gentiles. . . . . All flesh shall come to adore before My face, saith the Lord."[1] In this manner are explained the ancient promises and benedictions that all nations were to receive through the Saviour of the world.

IV. "The law shall come forth out of Sion."[2] But hereafter instead of one temple and a single altar for sacrifices, see what Malachias announces: "From the rising of the sun even to the going down,

[1] Isaias lxvi. 12, 19, 23. [2] Isaias ii. 3

My name is great among the gentiles; and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My name a *clean* oblation, saith the Lord of hosts."[1]

Could anything be more plain, or more capable of confounding not only the obstinacy of the Jews, but also the pride of the heretics of the sixteenth century?

V. The new covenant supposes a new organization in the society of the children of God. The Jewish legislation was based upon the isolation of one people; the new order includes all nations. This is indicated by that *indestructible kingdom* of which Daniel speaks; "But in the days of those kingdoms the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed: and His kingdom shall not be delivered up to another people: and it shall break in pieces, and shall consume all these kingdoms: and itself shall stand for ever;"[2] by that *mountain* which is exalted above all others, and to which, according to Isaias,[3] all nations shall flow; by that *tent*[4] which, notwithstanding its immense proportions, shall unite as one family all the children of God; and by that *spouse formerly barren and forsaken* whose wonderful fruitfulness the prophet has celebrated:[5] grand and sublime figures of the church of Jesus Christ.

[1] Malachias i. 11. [2] Daniel ii. 44. [3] Isaias ii.
[4] Isaias liv. [5] Isaias xlix., liv.

CHAPTER XIV.

PROPHETIC DETAILS CONCERNING THE MESSIAS.

The prophecies which we have cited accomplish the principal end of Divine Providence. In fact a few points well established were sufficient to prepare men for the coming of their Saviour and enable them to recognize Him with an entire certainty. Yet the prophets have entered into many details: why? Huet, the learned bishop of Avranches, gives three just and convincing reasons for it: firstly, to set off by this splendor the grandeur of the event; secondly, to nourish the piety of the saints; lastly, to confound the obstinacy of the wicked.[1] Huet devotes several chapters to the comparison of the texts of the prophets with those of the evangelists.

The prophetic details of the life and death of the Saviour, are not all equally clear and determined. Except at the times when God, by the ministry of men, caused the important circumstances of His designs of justice and mercy to be recorded, the prophets were saints who nourished their piety by the contemplation of the great mystery; besides, they were the greatest of poets. Their *lyrical enthusiasm* taking its source in the grand objects which were revealed to them, was not prejudicial to the

[1] *Demonstratio Evangelica*, vii. 1.

character which they derived from their mission; it only imparts to it a grace and a sweetness which have made us share their noble sentiments. David and Isaias are distinguished among these lyrists of the Redemption. Everything that offers them any resemblance to the object of their desires: the captivity of the people of God and their deliverance; the pride of Babylon and the magnanimity of Cyrus; the vices or the virtues of the kings of Juda; their own misfortune or prosperity, everything transports them and affords them an occasion of celebrating the glory of the Messias. Do you admire the bold and sublime ode? Read the second Psalm, *Quare fremuerunt*, upon the reign of Christ. If you love the pleasing pastoral, read the thirty-fifth chapter of Isaias, *Lætabitur deserta*, upon the benefits of the Redemption. Do you seek outbursts of eloquence and graphic description? then read this passage from the forty-ninth chapter of Isaias upon the Church: "Thus saith the Lord, the redeemer of Israel, his holy One, to the soul that is despised, to the nation that is abhorred, to the servant of rulers: Kings shall see, and princes shall rise up, and adore for the Lord's sake; because he is faithful, and for the holy One of Israel, who hath chosen thee.

"Thus saith the Lord: In an acceptable time I have heard thee; and in the day of salvation I have helped thee; and I have preserved thee, and given thee to be a covenant of the people, that thou mightest raise up the earth, and possess the inheritances that were destroyed:

"That thou mightest say to them that are bound: Come forth: and to them that are in darkness: Show yourselves. They shall feed in the ways; and their pastures shall be in every plain.

"They shall not hunger, nor thirst; neither shall the heat nor the sun strike them; for he that is merciful to them, shall be their shepherd: and at the fountains of waters he shall give them drink.

"And I will make all My mountains a way, and My paths shall be exalted.

"Behold, these shall come from afar, and behold, these from the north and from the sea, and these from the south country.

"Give praise, O ye heavens, and rejoice, O earth: ye mountains give praise with jubilation: because the Lord hath comforted His people, and will have mercy on His poor ones.

"And Sion said: The Lord hath forsaken me, and the Lord hath forgotten me.

"Can a woman forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? and if she should forget him, yet will not I forget thee.

"Behold, I have graven thee in My hands: thy walls are always before My eyes.

"Thy builders are come: they that destroy thee, and make thee waste shall go out of thee.

"Lift up thy eyes round about, and see all these are gathered together; they are come to thee: I live, saith the Lord, thou shalt be clothed with all these as an ornament; and as a bride thou shalt put them about thee.

"For thy deserts, and thy desolate places, and the land of thy destruction shall now be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants: and they that swallowed thee up shall be chased far away.

"The children of thy barrenness shall still say in thy ears: the place is too strait for me; make me room to dwell in.

"And thou shalt say in thy heart: Who hath begotten these? I was barren and brought not forth, led away, and captive: and who hath brought up these? I *was* destitute and alone: and these where were they? Thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will lift up My hand to the gentiles, and will set up My standard to the people. And they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and carry thy daughters upon their shoulders.

"And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and queens thy nurses: they shall worship thee with their face toward the earth; and they shall lick up the dust of thy feet. And thou shalt know that I am the Lord; for they shall not be confounded that wait for Him."

We will finish this study by collecting in historical order a summary of the scattered details of the prophecies upon the life and death of the Saviour of the world:

"Son of Abraham,[1] descended from the tribe of Juda,[2] through David,[3] the Messias expected by all nations,[4] will be born of a Virgin,[5] in the little town

[1] Gen. xii. [2] Gen. xlix. [3] Ps. lxxxviii.; Is. xi.; Jer. xxiii., etc.
[4] Gen. xlix.; Agg. ii. [5] Is. vii.; Jerem. xxxi.; Ezech. xliv.

of Bethlehem,[1] before the subjection of the nation,[2] in the seventieth week of years after the edict for the rebuilding of the temple at Jerusalem,[3] and before the destruction of the second temple by a foreign nation."[4]

"This coming will be preceded by a universal peace,[5] and be announced and prepared by a special messenger,[6] whose voice shall be heard in the wilderness.[7]

"The Messias will be, in name as well as in fact, *Jesus* or *Saviour*,[8] *Emmanuel* or God with us,[9] Christ or the Anointed,[10] Son of God,[11] God,[12] and a *hidden God*,[13] a priest according to the order of Melchisedec,[14] the *Just One*,[15] the *Holy One* and the *Saint* of *saints*,[16] the *Wonderful*, the *Counsellor*, the *Mighty God*, the *Father of the world to come*, the *Prince of peace*.[17]

"He shall be adored by the kings of the East who will offer Him gold and frankincense;[18] Rachel (whose tomb is near Bethlehem) shall weep for her children in vain.[19] The Saviour will sojourn in Egypt,[20] and at Nazareth in Galilee;[21] He will con-

[1] Mich. v. [2] Gen. xlix. [3] Dan. ix. [4] Agg. ii.; Malach. iii.
[5] Ps. lxxi.; Is. ii.; Dan. ii.; Zach. iii. [6] Malach. iii. [7] Is. lx.
[8] Habaccuc iii.; Is. li., etc. [9] Is. vii.
[10] Ps. ii., xliv.; Is. lxi.; Lam. iv. [11] Ps. ii.; Osee xi.
[12] Is. ix., xxv., xxxv., xl.; Ps. xliv., cix.; Baruch iii.; Malach. iii.
[13] Is. xlv. [14] Ps. cix. [15] Jer. xxiii.; Wisdom ii.; Is. xlv., lxii., etc.
[16] Ps. iv., xv.; Is. xii.; Dan. ix. [17] Is. ix.
[18] Ps. lxxi.; Is. lx. [19] Jerem. xxi. [20] Osee xi.
[21] Is. ix., xi., according to the Hebrew text.

verse with the inhabitants of Sion,[1] and He will immediately honor the temple by His presence.[2]

"He will be poor and in labors from His youth,[3] yet He will be king and the eternal possessor of a kingdom which will extend to the extremities of the earth.[4]

"He will be obedient;[5] meek and peaceable;[6] He shall not be sad, nor troublesome, nor have respect to persons; the bruised reed He shall not break; and smoking flax He shall not quench;[7] and yet He shall display the courage of a great warrior,[8] He shall overthrow nations and kings.[9]

"The spirit of God shall rest upon Him;[10] He shall make predictions;[11] He shall preach;[12] He shall instruct by parables;[13] He shall cause Himself to be admired upon the mountains and in Sion, where He shall announce peace and salvation, and shall say: Thy God shall reign![14] With the new law;[15] He will also communicate new dispositions to His people.[16] He will go to seek the lost sheep, He will raise those who are fallen, He will bind up the wounds of those who are wounded; He will strengthen the weak, confirm the faithful and lead them in the paths of justice.[17] He will satisfy the

[1] Is. xii., etc. [2] Aggeus ii.; Malach. iii.
[3] Ps. lxxxvii. [4] Ps. ii.
[5] Ps. xxxix. [6] Ps. cxix. [7] Is. xlii. [8] Is. xlii.
[9] Ps. xliv., cix.; Is. xi., xli.; Habaccuc iii.
[10] Is. xi. lxi. [11] Deut. xviii; Macch. i. [12] Ps. ii.; Is. lv.
[13] Ps. lxxvii. [14] Is. lii. [15] Deut. xviii.
[16] Jer. xi., xxxi.; Is. xliii., lxi. [17] Ezech. xxxiv.

poor with bread,[1] and perform miracles in favor of the blind, the deaf, the dumb, etc.[2]

"Yet notwithstanding the intrinsic force of His divine word;[3] notwithstanding the brightness of this heavenly light,[4] the Messias shall be a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to a great number of Jews:[5] for wisdom shall perish from their wise men, and the prophecies shall appear to them as a dream,[6] while the ignorant shall understand knowledge: and the tongue of the stammerer shall speak readily and plainly.[7] For the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner;[8] the Lord will give pastors to humble souls;[9] and He will send fishers to them,[10] but their voice shall be heard by the greater number only when the Lord shall be glorified.[11]

"Who hath believed our report? says Isaias, in beginning the picture of the sorrows of the Redeemer.[12] After having established the new covenant in the seventieth week predicted by Daniel, Christ will be put to death.[13] Instead of the love and the gratitude which He will have a right to expect on the part of His people, He will receive only hatred and persecution.[14] He will become a stranger to His brethren, because of His zeal for the house of God and for the glory of His name.[15]

[1] Ps. cxxxi.; Joel iii. [2] Is. xxxv., xlii.
[3] Is. xi., xlix. [4] Is. ix., xlii., lx. [5] Is. i., vi., viii., xlii.
[6] Is. xxix. [7] Is. xxxii. [8] Ps. cxvii. [9] Jer. iii.; Micheas ii.
[10] Jer. xvi. [11] Is. xxiv.
[12] Is. liii. [13] Dan. ix. [14] Ps. cviii.; Jer. xxxii. [15] Ps. lxviii.

"Jerusalem, it is true, 'will shout for joy:' Behold thy King and Saviour makes His entrance, mounted upon an ass and upon a colt, the foal of an ass;[1] but the wicked have resolved to lie in wait for the just, who promises to men heavenly knowledge and calls Himself the son of God.[2] The man in whom I trusted, who ate My bread, has been guilty of the blackest treason.[3] Alas! his days will be few and his dignity will pass to another;[4] I have been valued at thirty pieces of silver, but they will be refused and cast into the temple.[5]

"My heart is troubled within Me and the fear of death is upon Me. Fear and troubling are upon Me, and darkness hath covered Me.[6] Save Me from my enemies, O my God.[7] Upon the point of suffering, I have sought some one who might share My tribulations, or give Me some consolation, and I have found no one;[8] no one hath recognized Me.[9] O My God, thou hast removed from Me My acquaintances and friends;[10] by thy order the sword has struck the shepherd and the sheep are dispersed.[11]

"Unjust witnesses have risen up against Me and iniquity hath lied to itself.[12] The multitude of the wicked have whet their tongues like swords;[13] they have sought to surprise Me with hypocritical words.[14] When shall He die and His name perish.[15] Let us condemn Him to a most shameful death.[16]

[1] Zach. ix. [2] Wisdom ii. [3] Ps. xl. [4] Ps. cviii. [5] Zach. xi.
[6] Ps. liv. [7] Ps. xxi., lviii., lxx. [8] Ps. lxviii., xxi. [9] Ps. cxli.
[10] Ps. lxxxvii. [11] Zach. xiii. [12] Ps. xxvi., xxxiv.
[13] Ps. lxiii. [14] Ps. cviii. [15] Ps. xl. [16] Wisdom ii.

"As His oblation is voluntary, the Just One will not open His mouth to complain; He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, He shall be dumb as a lamb before His shearer.[1] He shall be filled with reproaches:[2] I have given My body to the strikers, and My cheeks to them that plucked them, I have not turned away My face from them that rebuked Me, and spit upon Me.[3] I am come into the depth of the sea: and a tempest hath overwhelmed Me. They are multiplied above the hairs of My head, who hate Me without cause. My enemies have grown strong who have wrongfully persecuted Me: then did I pay that which I took not away.[4]

"Surely He hath borne our infirmity, and carried our sorrows: and we have thought Him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted. He hath been covered with wounds, and He hath been bruised for our sins: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and by His bruises we are healed. We all like sheep have gone astray, and God hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He hath struck Him because of the crimes of His people. There is no beauty in Him, nor comeliness. We have seen Him: He hath become despised: an object of disdain, the most abject of men, a man of sorrows and His look is as it were hidden and despised;[5] He who was the most beautiful of the children of men,[6] is become more like a worm than a man, the reproach of men and the outcast of the people."[7]

[1] Is. liii.; Jerem. xi. [2] Lament. iii. [3] Is. l.; Lament. iii.
[4] Ps. lxviii. [5] Is. liii. [6] Ps. xl. [7] Ps. xxi.

"What are these wounds in the midst of Thy hands? — With these I was wounded in the house of them that loved Me.[1] They have dug My hands and feet: they have numbered My bones. They have looked and stared upon Me; they parted My garments among them; and upon My vesture they cast lots.[2] All they that saw Me have laughed Me to scorn: they have spoken with the lips and wagged the head.

"He hoped in the Lord, they say, let Him deliver Him: let Him save Him, seeing He delighteth in Him.[3] They have surrounded Me like bulls, they have roared like lions, they have raged against Me like a pack of dogs.[4] They gave Me gall for food, and in My thirst they gave Me vinegar to drink.[5] I am made a derision to all My people, their song all the day long.[6]

"In this state as voluntary victim for the sins of others, counted among malefactors, He prayed for sinners. He continues: My God, My God, look upon Me: Why hast Thou forsaken Me?[7] I have cried to Thee all the day, My eyes languish through poverty. Lord why castest Thou off My prayer: why turnest Thou away Thy face from Me? I have been raised up only to be humiliated and troubled.[8]

"At this last moment He called upon God and God heard Him; and the earth trembled and the mountains were shaken to their foundations.[9] It

[1] Zach. xiii. [2] Ps. xxi. [3] Ps. xxi.; Wisd. ii. [4] Ps. xxi.
[5] Ps. lxxxviii. [6] Lam. iii. [7] Ps. xxi.
[8] Ps. xxviii., lxxxvii., cxli., etc. [9] Ps. xvii.

shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord God, that the sun shall go down at mid-day; and I will make the earth dark in the day of light;[1] and I will pour out upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace, and of prayer, and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for Him as one mourneth for an only son and the death of the first-born.[2]

"He is cut off out of the land of the living:[3] yet no bone shall be broken in Him;[4] He shall be placed in the tomb and covered with a stone;[5] but Lord, Thou wilt not leave His soul in hell; nor wilt Thou give Thy Holy One to see corruption.[6] Free among the dead, He shall deliver those who are in chains, and those who dwell in the tomb.[7] And they shall say in that day: Lo, this is our God, we have waited for Him, and He will save us: this is the Lord; we have patiently waited for Him; we shall rejoice and be joyful in His salvation.[8] This benefit will be accomplished in two days, and on the third He will raise us up:[9] yes, He will redeem them from death and He will be thy death, O death! and thy ruin, O hell![10]

"The root of Jesse set up as a standard among the nations, shall receive their prayers, and His tomb shall be glorious.[11] And the Lord shall give the ungodly for His burial, and the rich for His death:

[1] Amos viii. [2] Zach. xii. [3] Is. liii. [4] Exod. xii.; Num. ix.
[5] Ps. lxxxvii.; Lam. iii. [6] Ps. xv. [7] Ps. lxvii., cvi.
[8] Is. xxv. [9] Osee vi. [10] Osee xiii. [11] Is. xi.

since He has given His life for sin He shall have a long-lived seed; He shall divide the spoils of the strong, He shall have a multitude for His portion and He shall justify them by His doctrine.[1] He shall destroy sin and establish the reign of justice.[2]

"Princes, open the eternal gates: behold the King of glory, the Lord of hosts![3] and the Lord mounts triumphant with the captives whom He hath delivered.[4] And His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is over against Jerusalem.[5] And the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and He came even to the ancient of days (the Eternal): and they presented Him before Him. And He gave Him power, and glory and a kingdom;[6] and the Lord said to my Lord: sit Thou on my right hand;[7] until the day of His wrath against the wicked, when the sun and the moon shall refuse their light and all the elements shall be overthrown.[8]

"God shall pour forth His spirit upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem; He shall give them a new spirit and a new heart.[9] Preached at first in Sion,[10] the word of God shall be carried by faithful witnesses[11] into Africa, Lydia, Italy, Greece, to isles afar off, to nations sitting in the shadow of death, whom they shall gain to the Lord.[12] I will bring them through the fire: and I will try them as gold is tried.[13] A

[1] Is. liii.
[2] Dan. ix.; Is. xliii., lii.; Ezech. xi.; Mich. vii.; Zach. iii.
[3] Ps. xiii. [4] Ps. xlvi., lxvii. [5] Zach. xiv. [6] Dan. vii.
[7] Ps. cix. [8] Is. xiii.; Jonas ii.
[9] Is. xlvi.; Ezech. xxxvi.; Joel ii. [10] Is. ii.; Mich. xi.
[11] Is. xlii., xliv. [12] Is. lx., lii. [13] Zach. xiii.

new covenant shall unite all nations:[1] wolves and lambs, lions and sheep shall live together, gentle and peaceable.[2] The sacrifice of this covenant shall be offered in every place,[3] by priests taken from every nation,[4] under the high priest according to the order of Melchisedec.[5]

"But what blindness shall be equal to that of the people of God?[6] They will persecute Him whom thou hast smitten and they will add to the grief of His wounds.[7] The prophecies shall be to them a sealed book.[8] Blind and ungrateful men, they shall be without a king, without a chief, without a sacrifice, without an altar;[9] the desolation shall continue even to the consummation, and to the end."[10]

"Considered as a whole," says M. Drach, the celebrated converted Rabbi, "the prophecies form a most perfect picture. The most ancient prophets sketch the first outline: as time rolls on, they complete the traits that were left imperfect by their predecessors; the nearer they approach the event, the more their colors brighten; and when the picture is finished the artists disappear. The last, Malachias, on retiring, names the person (John the Baptist) who is to raise the curtain on it."

[1] Is. xlix.; Jer. xxxi.; Osee ii., etc.
[2] Is. xi.; Soph. iii.; Jer. xxxii. [3] Malach. i. [4] Is. lxvi.
[5] Ps. cix. [6] Is. xlii. [7] Ps. lxviii. [8] Is. xxix.
[9] Osee iii. [10] Dan. ix., etc.

CHAPTER XV.

THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE PROPHECIES.

THE epoch of the coming of the Messias had been predicted so precisely, that after the establishment of the Roman empire and the general peace that followed, all nations were in expectation of the great event. This expectation had been foretold, as we have seen, and it is recorded by contemporary historians. "People were generally persuaded," says Tacitus, "on the faith of the ancient prophecies, that the East was about to prevail, and that from Juda would come forth the masters of the world.[1] Suetonius and Josephus express themselves in nearly the same terms.[2] Nature, they said, was in travail of an extraordinary ruler, and the senate passed a decree of extermination against the new-born. Herod went further; he carried its barbarous sentence into execution. Such is the report of Suetonius in the life of Augustus.

Eloquence and poetry confirm history. Cicero speaks, from the books of the Sybils, of a king whom it was necessary to acknowledge in order to be saved. And who is unacquainted with the celebrated eclogue of Virgil upon the birth of that child

[1] Tacitus, *Hist. V.*
[2] Suetonius, *Vita Vespasiani.*

"who descended from heaven to restore the golden age"?

Whilst Europe expected a Saviour from the East, the Indians and the Chinese expected one from the West. Voltaire himself admits this. From every side, the attention of men was concentrated upon a little spot of the globe, which Boulanger, another infidel, aptly calls "the pole of hope of all nations."

Ambition and flattery, it is true, have applied these predictions to different persons (Josephus applies them to Vespasian); but these very applications, instead of weakening, prove the fact of the general expectation.

How and by whom was this expectation justified? In whom were these prophecies accomplished? The picture of the prophecies of the Old Testament is the picture of the life and death of Jesus Christ, the abridged history of His works, and of the wonderful establishment of His Church. The prophets were witnesses who testify unanimously in favor of Jesus.[1] All their predictions and all their prophetic types, all the figurative institutions of the Old Law, and even the traditions scattered throughout the world; all point to Jesus of Nazareth: everything proves to us that He is the true Messias indicated by divine inspiration, the Saviour of the human race. The relation is evident and the application takes place of itself.

Therefore the Apostles constantly invoked the testimony of the prophets to convince the Jews. To

[1] Acts x. 43.

other auditors they proposed other arguments, but with the Jews none could equal the force of this one. St. Paul spent whole days showing them Jesus in the law of Moses and in the prophets: "Persuading them concerning Jesus, out of the law of Moses and the prophets, from morning till evening." [1] St. Peter made it the basis of exhortations which converted at one time three thousand, and at another, five thousand people. After having declared himself a witness of the heavenly voice heard on Mount Thabor, he appeals to the prophecies as a more unquestionable proof.[2] Jesus Himself raised the courage of His disciples, by showing them that what troubled them was only the accomplishment of the prophecies: "And beginning from Moses, and all the prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things that were concerning Him." [3] It is thus that He had spoken to the Jews: "Study the Scriptures, for you think in them to have life everlasting: and the same are they that give testimony of Me." [4]

In order to give the demonstration derived from the prophecies its whole force, we shall consider them as a *whole*. It matters little if some of the details are capable of a double interpretation: there remains more than sufficient to convince the most critical minds. The multiplicity of details is such that no other life than that of Jesus Christ could ever approach that resemblance.

[1] Acts xxviii. 23. [2] 2 Peter i. 19.
[3] Luke xxiv. 27. [4] John v. 39.

From this we may deduce another conclusion. The prophets proved during their life-time, as we have seen, the divinity of their mission; had they not done this, their predictions concerning the Messias would nevertheless have been vindicated of themselves; such a life portrayed in advance and with so many details, proves the divine inspiration of these historians of the future. In a word, such is the force of this demonstration that we may say: Jesus is the true Messias, firstly, because He is the one designated by prophets inspired by God, and secondly, independently of the proofs of the inspiration of the prophets, because His life could not have been described in such a manner without divine assistance.

If this reasoning may be applied to the time when our divine Saviour appeared upon the earth, what shall we say now, when the stability of His institutions has justified many other prophecies, when for eighteen centuries the Jews find themselves in the state predicted by the prophets, without an altar[1] dispersed among all nations, confounded with none, reserved until the end of time as the unanswerable witnesses of the truths which they themselves denied?[2]

Thus Christianity, that is to say (as we shall see) the Catholic Church, yes, "the Catholic Church alone fills all the preceding centuries by a series of events which cannot be disputed. The Law came before the Gospel, the succession of Moses and the

[1] Osee iii. 4. [2] Deut. xxxviii.

prophets forms only a part of the chain that is continued by Jesus Christ; to be expected, to have come, to be acknowledged by a posterity which shall last as long as the world endures, such is the character of the Messias in whom we believe."[1] . . . .

[1] Bossuet, *Hist. Univ.* 2d page.

CHAPTER XVI.

DIVINE MISSION OF JESUS CHRIST.

We have already considered one side of this question; we have established the mission of Jesus Christ by the prophecies; we now come to the direct proofs which He Himself has furnished during His mortal career. These proofs, the most convincing that can be imagined, will be united with those which are destined to display to the eyes of the universe the divinity of Jesus Christ and to give a divine sanction to all His institutions. Figures and prophecies from the beginning, prodigies of every kind during the life of the Saviour, the propagation of His holy law by the blood of martyrs, the perpetuity of the same faith confirmed by new prodigies in the Catholic Church: in this manner the miraculous chain of proofs of our belief is developed.

The facts to be examined rest upon the highest historical authority to which man can appeal. This authority is that of the Gospels and the other books of the New Testament. An essential basis of our demonstration is here in question: but the matter is so clear and so little disputed that it is sufficient to point out the considerations that go to establish the authenticity of the gospel history and of the other books of the New Testament.

I. The Gospels do not form a single narrative; there are four of them: four histories of the same life, written by eye witnesses or by those who received their accounts from eye witnesses, who, converted by the miracles which they relate, afterward shed their blood in testimony of their truth.

It is the same with the other writings of the New Testament; and these writings based upon the Gospels, whose facts and principles they develop, furnish yet another proof of their authenticity.

This collection of testimony comprises, therefore:

The Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John.—The Acts of the Apostles compiled by St. Luke.—Fourteen Epistles of St. Paul; one to the Romans which treats in a particular manner of the important question of faith and justification; two to the Corinthians which enunciate the most important points of the spirit of Christianity; one to the Galatians upon the excellence of the law of grace; one to the Ephesians upon the duties of a Christian life, also the Epistle to the Philippians, the Epistle to the Colossians and the two Epistles to the Thessalonians. Then follow two Epistles to Timothy, one to Titus upon the duties of pastors, a letter of recommendation to Philemon, and lastly the sublime Epistle to the Hebrews. — The Catholic Epistle of St. James upon good works; — Two Epistles of St. Peter, in which he enumerates the chief duties of the Christian; — Three Epistles of St. John, which breathe the charity of the beloved disciple; — The Catholic Epistle of St. Jude against heresy; — The

Apocalypse, that is to say, the mysterious visions of St. John.

II. The four evangelists have written the life of Jesus Christ (and the Apostles their Epistles), not by conferring with one another, nor when they were together, but when they were separated by great distances and at different times. Accordingly there are differences in their narratives; but these differences, which only supply omissions without ever contradicting one another, are a proof of their isolation and their veracity. As to certain controverted texts, we will not discuss them at present; these subordinate questions can be better treated when we have established the authority of the Church; for the present it will be sufficient to dwell upon the main and essential portion of a truthful history.

III. The events related by the writers of the New Testament were not only of great importance to their contemporaries; they were of such a character as to provoke on their part the most emphatic denials, if there had been any ground for them. The blind obstinacy of the Jews joined to their silence or admissions[1] confirms the veracity of our books; and the Roman senate preserved in its archives corroborating evidence which St. Justin and Tertullian did not hesitate to quote in their *Apologies* for the

[1] See these admissions in *l'Histoire de l'établissement du Christanisme*, by Bullet, and in *l'Histoire de la vraie Religion* by Abbé Cayol. In regard to the famous testimony of the historian Josephus, in favor of the person of Jesus Christ, see the dissertation of Huet: *Demonstratio Evangelica*, Prop. III.

Christian Religion. St. Justin cites in particular the tables of the census, which record the birth of Jesus Christ at Bethlehem; Tertullian recalls the miraculous eclipse — for science calculated none — which took place at the death of our Saviour. This event is recorded by several historians. "The authority of our Gospels," says Irenæus, "is so well established that the heretics themselves give testimony to them." And not only the heretics, but the most bitter enemies of Christ, namely, Celsus, Porphyrius and Julian the Apostate concur in this testimony.

IV. The style of writing adopted by the sacred writers constitutes an intrinsic proof of veracity to the mind of every unprejudiced reader. There is no passion, no amplification even in the most surprising events. Freethinkers themselves have been struck with it.

"This is not the way that people invent," says J. J. Rousseau; "the Gospel contains evidences of truth so grand, so striking, so perfectly inimitable, that its inventor would be more astonishing than its hero."

V. Never were books preserved with more care or guarded with more vigilance from every alteration. The first Christians treasured with respect the originals of the apostolic epistles that were addressed to them; they copied them with scrupulous fidelity; they read them in their assemblies; and they suffered torture and death rather than deliver them to the infidels. From the first centuries the

pastors disavowed the unauthorized writings which heresy or the exaggeration of a false devotion endeavored to introduce. This was the principal object of the solicitude and decrees of the Council of Carthage, held in the year 397. Long before this period the writings of St. Justin, Tertullian, Origen and others contain evidence which may be found in the studies of M. Nicolas (part third) on this subject.

What does the Gospel history, thus placed above all controversy, teach us concerning Jesus? It shows us in Him, not only the model of the most sublime virtues, the type of a superhuman perfection, the incomparable preacher of the most elevated dogmas and the holiest morality, but also the messenger of God, fulfilling the prophecies and imposing His doctrine by the authority of miracles and prophecies. It is important to establish the miracles and prophecies, the true seal of divine works, as we have before seen.

And to anticipate every vain subtlety and every contrary supposition, we will remark that the Evangelists were not content with saying that Jesus performed such and such a miracle: they suffered the facts to speak for themselves; and these facts are such that the simple and the ignorant can appreciate them as well as the learned. It is sufficient to have eyes to see and ears to hear. Thousands of Jews saw them and were convinced;[1] the pharisees themselves were confounded by them, and subse-

[1] John vi.

quently the Apostles appealed to the whole nation as witnesses of them.[1] In our turn, we can judge of them from the Gospel narrative.

The appreciation of the miracles of Jesus is rendered still easier for us, as well as for the Jews then, by their multiplicity and variety. Their multiplicity provoked examination, especially from His adversaries, while it excluded all possibility of deception; their variety satisfied them completely upon the means employed, and compelled the most critical to acknowledge the finger of God in them.

It is true that Jesus preferred to use His power to display His goodness. The deaf, the dumb, the blind, the lame, the possessed, paralytics, the sick of every kind came in crowds, not only from all parts of Judea, but also from Syria and the neighboring countries; and Jesus cured them, some by the contact of His beneficent hand, others by touching His garments, most of them by a single word; even the absent experienced the effect of His all-powerful word. "Healing all diseases and infirmities among the people."[2] "For virtue went out from Him, and healed all."[3] The Gospel is full of these details.

Among so many divine actions, there are some which of themselves and from the circumstances that accompany them, deserve our special attention.

The character of these miracles renders them unquestionable proofs of the mission of Jesus Christ. We will select four different kinds.

[1] Acts ii. [2] Matt. iv. 23. [3] Luke vi. 19.

I. *Wonderful cures.* The cure of the paralytic[1] had for unwilling witnesses the pharisees and the doctors of the law. The crowd was so great that it was necessary to let the paralytic down through the roof to place him before Jesus. "Man," said the Saviour to him, "thy sins are forgiven thee." At these words the pharisees were scandalized and said to themselves: He blasphemeth; God alone can forgive sins. Jesus knew their thoughts and answered them: "But that you may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (He said to the sick of the palsy) I say to thee, Arise, take up thy bed and go into thy house."

The cure of the *man that was born blind*, admirably related by St. John, chapter ix., was only the better authenticated by the efforts of the pharisees to discredit it.

II. *The multiplication of the loaves.* This miracle so remarkable in itself, derives great force from the testimony of five or six thousand persons whom Jesus fed in the desert with five loaves and two fishes, and at another time with seven loaves and a few little fishes. The remains of the repast filled several baskets. See the details in Matt. xiv., xv.; Mark vi.; John vi.

III. *Raising of the dead.* The number was considerable to judge by the reply of Jesus to his disciples.[2] The dead who were restored to life were placed upon the same line with the sick that were

[1] Matt. ix.; Luke v. [2] Matt. xi.

healed: "The blind see . . . . the dead rise again;" and St. John, chap. xxi., says the facts mentioned in the Gospel are but a small portion of the wonderful actions of Jesus.

The Gospel records particularly the raising of the daughter of Jairus to life, for whose burial preparations had been made;[1] the raising of the son of the widow of Naim, whom they were carrying out for burial and whom Jesus restored to life by his sovereign command: "Young man, I say to thee: Arise;" and finally the raising up of Lazarus, the most remarkable of all. He had been dead four days and placed in the tomb where putrefaction had already commenced. He is restored to life in the presence of a great number of witnesses belonging to the upper class, who were well informed and the most of them hostile to the Saviour.[2]

IV. *The resurrection of Jesus Himself*, the miracle of miracles, a miracle predicted by Him and upon which He fixed in advance the attention of His disciples as well as that of His enemies. "For as Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights; so shall the Son of man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights."[3] Several times He predicted to His disciples: "Behold, we go up to Jerusalem: and the Son of man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes: and they shall deliver Him to the gentiles to be mocked and scourged, and to be crucified: and the third day He shall rise again."[4]

[1] Matt. ix.; Mark v.; Luke viii. [2] John xi.
[3] Matt. xii. 40. [4] Matt. xx. 18, 19.

So precisely informed, the Jews took every precaution against deceit: and after having made sure of His death, they obtained authority from Pilate to seal the sepulchre and guard it with men of their own choice. These precautions only served to render the miracle incontestable and to refute in advance all the subterfuges of obstinacy. But this is not all: the miracle of the resurrection of Jesus, a fundamental dogma of the Christian faith, should possess all the marks of the most complete certainty.

After Jesus had risen He was seen by more than five hundred persons at one time;[1] He gave to His disciples the most palpable proofs of the reality of His resurrection; He conversed with them during forty days; He at last ascended into heaven in the presence of a large multitude of witnesses. Add to this that the miracle of the resurrection will be preached throughout the world, confirmed by the testimony of the blood of *eleven millions* of martyrs and accepted with all its consequences by a society which will regenerate the world: and all these miraculous facts were predicted by the Saviour Himself.

These facts belong to the Church and we shall refer to them again; in the meantime let us not lose sight of the connection of all these proofs. They are such that "God Himself," said Bossuet, "could do nothing to establish more clearly the certainty of the fact, than to subject it to the testimony of the

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 6.

senses; nor could He give a stronger proof of the sincerity of these witnesses than that of a cruel death."[1] St. John Chrysostom makes an apt reflection: "It is only too common," says he, "to forget after their death those whom we have loved most tenderly. The Apostles abandoned and denied Jesus Christ whilst He was living; they die for Him after He has been crucified. They therefore have seen His resurrection."

To the testimony of miracles may be added that of the most precise prophecies. Besides the circumstances of His death and resurrection, Jesus predicts the denial of Peter, the wonderful success of the apostolic preaching, the perpetuity of His Church, the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, etc. This last prophecy is the more remarkable in as much as it completes our knowledge of the conduct of divine Providence in regard to His chosen people. At different times Jesus plainly declared that of the temple of Jerusalem there would not remain a stone upon a stone. "Master," said His disciples to Him, "when will that happen?" — "Amen I say to you, this generation shall not pass away, until all these things be done. But before all these things they will lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and into prisons, dragging you before kings and governors, for My name's sake: And it shall happen to you for a testimony. Jerusalem, Jerusalem! For the days

[1] *Hist. Univ.* 2 Part. Upon the resurrection see Bourdaloue and others.

shall come upon thee: and thy enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and straiten thee on every side; and they shall beat thee flat to the ground, and thy children who are in thee, and they shall not leave in thee a stone upon a stone: because thou hast not known the time of thy visitation. . . . . Thy children shall fall by the edge of the sword; and they shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down by the Gentiles."[1] We know the accomplishment of this prophecy: Josephus, a contemporary historian has transmitted to us its terrible details. But in order that the word of the Saviour upon this great event might receive a more solemn confirmation, God permitted an apostate emperor to employ his utmost endeavors to falsify it. Julian commanded the rebuilding of the temple, but God prevented it by prodigies attested by St. Ambrose, St. John Chrysostom, St. Gregory Nazianzen, and confirmed (Gibbon spitefully acknowledges) by the irresistible testimony of Ammianus Marcellinus, the friend of Julian. "While Alidius," says Ammianus, "assisted by the governor of the province, urged with vigor and diligence the execution of the work, fearful balls of fire frequently breaking out near the foundations, several times burned or scorched the workmen, and rendered the place inaccessible. The terrible element continuing in this manner obstinately to repel every effort, the undertaking was abandoned." The only result of this attempt was

[1] Matt. xxiv.; Mark xiii.; Luke xix., xxi.

that in digging the foundations of the new temple, they destroyed the foundations of the old, so that literally there remained not a *stone upon a stone.* Some have vainly endeavored to explain this fact by an accumulation of gaseous substances.[1]

As to the Jewish nation, for eighteen centuries it has been dispersed into all the countries of the world, and (singular fact in its history) it has mingled with all nations without being identified with any, a perpetual witness of the accomplishment of all the prophecies, a final conquest reserved to the Church of Jesus Christ when it shall have converted all the Gentiles.

To these proofs of divine intervention what can incredulity oppose? Deny the facts? As well deny the whole history of the human race. "It would require a face of brass," says Bayle, "to deny the miracles of the Gospel." Distort them? But the facts are so clear, so palpable, that nothing can lessen their force. Some have attempted it however; Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian the Apostate have talked of *magic;* in these days some have made a great ado about the words *magnetism*, *moral influence;* but how can a few doubtful and obscure phenomena explain, for example, the resurrection of a dead person? Is it necessary to have penetrated all the secrets of nature, as Rousseau pretends, to appreciate a fact contrary to the most constant laws of nature? Driven to the wall by this argument and

[1] See upon this subject the work of *Mgr. Mislin: Les Saints Lieux.*

all other explanations having been exhausted, some German rationalists have gone to the length of seeing in the Gospel facts and even in the person of Jesus Christ, only *myths* and *allegories*. Among these may be distinguished Strauss, who has written *The Life of Jesus:* this is the last product of foolish German *exegesis* and Protestant free examination. This is a case in which we may say with St. Paul that these pretended wise men have lost even common sense. Calling themselves wise, they became fools.

For Him who announces Himself as the messenger of God, the miracles and the prophecies are *credentials* that accredit Him to men. By the gift of miracles, God approves the doctrine of Him to whom He lends His power. What then if the miracles are performed with the express intention of proving the divinity of the mission and the doctrine? Now, this is what Jesus has done.

I. Interrogated by the disciples of John the Baptist, whether He is the divine messenger expected for the salvation of the world, Jesus includes His reply in the evidence of His miracles: "The blind see, the lame walk . . . . ." This is a noble and distinct declaration that He is and He gives as proofs the most brilliant miracles.

II. In the twelfth chapter of St. Matthew, the pharisees having demanded of Him a miracle as a special proof of His mission (they acknowledge therefore the value of such a proof), Jesus who did not cease to give these proofs, appeals this time to the future miracle of His resurrection.

III. "If you cannot believe what I teach you," says Jesus,[1] "otherwise believe for the works themselves."

Another day the pharisees being troubled, but not sincere, said to Him: "How long dost Thou hold our souls in suspense? If thou be the Christ tell us plainly." Jesus answered them: "I speak to you, and you believe not: the works that I do in the name of My Father, they give testimony of Me."[2]

IV. At the time of the raising of Lazarus, Jesus expressly declared that He performed this miracle that the people might recognize His divine mission.[3]

The conclusion of this chapter is, that Jesus declared Himself the messenger of God, the true Messias sent to establish the new covenant, and that this assertion as well as the supernatural actions by which He confirmed it, is recorded in documents of unquestionable authority. Therefore His mission is divine.

[1] John xiv. [2] John x. 24, 25. [3] John xi. 42.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE DIVINITY OF JESUS CHRIST.

THE divinity of the mission of Jesus Christ is one thing, the divinity of His person is another. We have proved the first proposition; we will now take up the second. Let us first define it.

Jesus Christ is God, not by a figurative appellation, nor in the sense of divine adoption, nor of a favor, however sublime we may suppose it to be; the Christian faith admits no concession of this kind: Jesus Christ is *true God* in the rigorous acceptation of the term, *Son of God* by nature and from all eternity, as He became man eighteen centuries ago through mercy. It is in view of the dogma thus defined that we select our proofs. These proofs are derived, firstly, from the prophecies of the Old Testament; secondly, from the life of Jesus Christ; thirdly, from the teaching of the Apostles, a teaching confirmed by ecclesiastical tradition.

Proofs derived from the prophecies.

We have proved that Jesus is the Messias announced by the prophets; if He is, He possesses all the qualities that the prophets attribute to the Messias. Now,

I. In a chapter evidently devoted to the Messias,

Isaias[1] declares in the most positive manner that God Himself will come to save men. And, to guard this expression from any restrictive interpretation, he adds immediately the miracles of divine power; then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, ... In another place it is the people who, transported by these miraculous favors, exclaim: "Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us.[2]

II. The same prophet gives to the Saviour, and note this, "to the child that is born to us," among other names those of the *mighty God*,[3] of *God with us;* and Jeremias says that they shall call Him the Lord (Jehovah) our Just One.[4]

III. The voice crying in the desert was, according to Isaias, to announce the great event in these terms: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the wilderness the paths of our God."[5] And then: "Say, O prophet, to the cities of Juda: Behold your God; behold the Lord God shall come with strength. . . . . ." "He whom I shall send," saith God in Malachias, "shall prepare the way before *My* face."[6]

IV. "This is our God, who after having taught Jacob was seen upon the earth and conversed with men."[7] "But I will rejoice in the Lord; and I will joy in God my Saviour (Jesus)."[8] See Psalms xliv.

[1] Isaias xxxv. [2] Isaias xxv. [3] Isaias ix.
[4] Jeremias xxiii. [5] Isaias xl. [6] Malachias iii.
[7] Baruch iii. [8] Habacuc iii. 18.

9, cix. 1, etc.: "The Lord said to my Lord: sit thou on my right hand."

After these positive proofs, if we wish to penetrate further into the mystery of the Saviour God, the book of Ecclesiasticus shows us "the Eternal Wisdom coming forth from the bosom of God as an effusion of His substance; arranging the universe and playing with its wonders: like a bountiful river, it pours forth its immense waters in paradise, where it nourishes the understanding of our first parents: then, dried up by the malice of men, it waters only the heritage of Jacob; lastly this same Wisdom, promised to the race of David with the power of a perpetual kingdom, resumes its course like the Phison and the Euphrates, and its waters diffuse knowledge to the extremities of the world, to the most remote parts of the earth. Henceforth Wisdom establishes itself among those who seek it; it will no longer cease to be present with all their generations." [1]

This is the mystical prophecy of the history which we shall presently read in St. John.

Proofs derived from the life of Jesus Christ.

Did Jesus, the expected Messias, confirm these predictions concerning His dignity? He did more; He explained and developed them. Before furnishing these proofs, let us remark that the testimony of Jesus possesses a value independent of the prophecies. After the demonstration of the preceding, the question of the divinity of Jesus Christ may be re-

[1] cclus. xxiv.

duced to this: Did Jesus affirm His divinity? If He did, His miracles prove this assertion as they prove the truth of His doctrine and the divinity of His mission. Now, Jesus not only declared Himself the *Son of God and true God*, but His disciples and even His enemies clearly understood that such was the sense of His words. In fact,

I. In the tenth chapter of the Gospel of St. John, after having proved by His miracles that He is the Christ, Jesus goes still further and says to the Jews: "No man shall snatch My sheep out of My hand as no one can snatch them out of the hand of My Father. I and the Father are one."

He thus affirms at the same time the unity of nature in God and the distinction of the divine persons; He claims for Himself the divine nature and equality with the Father. The Jews are not deceived and at this word alone, they pick up stones to stone Him. "Jesus answered them: Many good works have I shown you from My Father: for which of these good works do you stone Me? The Jews answered Him: For a good work we stone Thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God." To a question so positive what does Jesus reply? Firstly, as to the expression *God*, He remarks that it has been applied even to those who only represented the divine authority among men; then, reasoning *a fortiori*, "If He called them gods, to whom the word of God was spoken: Do you say of Him whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world: Thou blasphem-

est; because I said, I am the Son of God?" Finally, He explains the special character of holiness of this Son of God, and supporting Himself by His miracles He returns to the identity of nature which makes Him *one with His Father*, and which constitutes the most complete idea and the most profound explanation of His divinity. "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. But if I do, though you will not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in the Father."

He says at another time:[1] "All things whatsoever the Father hath, are Mine." And speaking to His Father:[2] "All Mine are Thine, and Thine are Mine." And in the fifth chapter: "What things soever the Father doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner." And again:[3] "He that seeth Me seeth the Father also." Nature, attributes, operations; everything is common to Them, and the Jews were right in saying that He made Himself equal to God.

II. One day Jesus questions His disciples concerning His person: "Whom do you say that I am?" And St. Peter replies: "Thou art Christ the Son of the living God." The profession of the important dogma is clear and precise: Jesus, far from rejecting it, declares that it is inspired by His Father who is in Heaven: He also enhances its signification by giving them to understand that His filiation is a mystery which God alone can make known.

[1] John xvi. 15. [2] John xvii. 10. [3] John xiv. 9.

Later, when the high priest solemnly adjures Him to say whether He is the Son of God, Jesus confirms this belief so plainly and the whole assembly comprehend it so well, that they exclaim: He hath blasphemed, and they pronounce the sentence of death upon Him.[1]

III. St. Thomas is not less explicit than St. Peter, when, after he had assured himself of the reality of the resurrection of Jesus, he cries out: "My Lord and my God!" And here again Jesus approves his faith and blesses those who shall imitate him in succeeding ages.[2]

IV. Many other passages of the Gospel show us Jesus speaking and acting as God. He is the Light of the World;[3] the Way, the Truth, and the Life;[4] before Abraham was made, He is. Like His Father He hears our prayers;[5] He comes with Him to dwell in us;[6] He promises eternal life to those who believe in Him;[7] He forgives sins;[8] He shall judge the living and the dead.[9] What creature can use this language and associate himself thus with God?

Jesus therefore declared His divinity to all classes of persons; to the multitude, to the rulers of the synagogue, to His disciples. If He nevertheless calls Himself the *Son of Man*, it is because He was also the Son of Man; if He says that the Father is greater than He, it is from the same point of view of

[1] Matthew xxvi. [2] John xx. 28, 29. [3] Mark xiv.
[4] John xiv. 16. [5] John xiv., xv. [6] John xiv.
[7] John x. [8] Luke v. [9] Matt. xxv.

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His human nature; if He distinguishes His will from that of His Father, it is because His human will was really distinct from His Father's will; in a word, it is because He was *God incarnate*, the *God-Man*.

Moreover, the whole life of Jesus Christ is a sublime confirmation of His divinity.

Independently of His miracles and His prophecies, the heavenly character of His doctrine and the incomparable splendor of His holiness raised Him so far above the condition of man, that He excited everywhere the most profound admiration and veneration. Even the ignominies of His death, far from weakening this impression revealed in Him a patience and a charity that filled the Roman governor with astonishment and fear, as in our days they compel acknowledgments from all those who reflect. "If the life and death of Socrates are the life and death of a sage," says J. J. Rousseau, "the life and death of Jesus Christ are the life and death of a God." "I am acquainted with men," said Napoleon one day to one of his intimate friends, "and I tell you that Jesus Christ is not a man," and he himself develops the proofs of this statement.

These last moral considerations do not of themselves constitute a decisive demonstration of the Divinity of Jesus Christ, like the proofs which we have before adduced; but, united to those proofs, they give them an irresistible force. In presence of the affirmations of Jesus, we must say: either Jesus is God, or He is only a miserable impostor. Now,

His whole life contradicts this last blasphemous supposition, nor can His enemies deny the holiness and purity of His character.

By the admission of M. Laurent, Jesus Christ is the greatest prophet (*révélateur*), *the highest character that has appeared upon the earth.* Let us remark, in passing, that this manner of looking upon Jesus Christ is quite modern; it is a fruit of irreligious and inconsistent eclecticism. They exalt Jesus Christ as a man in order to cancel by that means the obligation of adoring Him as God. When after that, they refuse to acknowledge His divinity, they are inconsistent, they outrage reason itself which they make their idol.

Proofs derived from the teaching of the Apostles.

If the words of Jesus Christ were to be understood in a restrictive sense, the Apostles whom He taught for a long time, particularly after His resurrection, would have informed us of it; on the contrary, they place in a clear light the Divinity of their Master.

I. St. John wrote his Gospel to confirm this dogma especially, and from the first lines, he establishes it in the most formal and sublime manner. Going back to the origin of all things, he contemplates in the first place the Word of God, true God, with God; and then: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we saw His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." This is a precise explanation of the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God and of His divine personality in the humility of the flesh.

II. In his first Epistle, St. John resumes the consideration of the Eternal Word, the word of life, the life that was manifested, and he dwells with complaisance upon the fact that he was permitted to hear Him, to see Him, to touch Him. Further on, he establishes the perfect identity of nature between the Word and the two other persons of the most Holy Trinity: "The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one."

III. St. Paul teaches the same doctrine in his Epistle to the Philippians: "God by nature and the equal of God, Jesus Christ debased Himself, taking the form of a servant, became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."[1]

IV. In his Epistle to the Romans,[2] the same Apostle recalls in two words the same dogma: "Of the Jewish race Christ is born according to the flesh, who is over all things, God blessed forever."

V. The Epistle to the Hebrews[3] dwells with complaisance on the divine attributes of Jesus Christ: "Son of God, by whom the ages have received their birth, the splendor of the glory and the figure of the divine substance, sitting on a throne that belongs only to God, adored by the angels, immovable, eternal," etc.

VI. The first chapter of the Epistle to the Colossians contains similar expressions, and in the second chapter the Apostle expressly warns the faithful against all false philosophy concerning the dogma

[1] Philippians ii. 6, 7, 8. [2] Romans ix. [3] Hebrews i.

and declares that in Jesus Christ dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead corporally.

VII. St. Peter reproaches the Jews for having slain the author of life.[1]

Proofs derived from the uniform belief of the first Christians.

Whatever the Apostles wrote, and long before it was written, they taught by word of mouth to be transmitted from age to age to the disciples of Jesus. Thence are derived the *apostolic traditions*. We will not now discuss the dogmatic value of these traditions, nor the authority of the Church and Councils; we only desire to establish the fact of the belief of the first Christians in the Divinity of Jesus Christ and thus complete the demonstration of this dogma.

The dogma was too well established and too intimately connected with all religious practices for any serious discussions upon it to arise for a long time. It was only in the fourth century that a contrary opinion came into violent collision with the universal belief, and the Fathers of the Council of Nice had no difficulty in confounding the innovators. The first *symbols* or professions of faith, the *liturgies* in use, the *acts* of the martyrs, the *writings* of the immediate successors of the Apostles, the *Apologies* of the Christian religion, even the *testimonies of the pagans:* everything concurs in proving the *Divinity* of Jesus Christ, not in the Arian sense of a *resemblance* to the divine nature, but in the rigorous acceptation of an *identity* of nature or substance; and

[1] Acts iii. 15.

the Council sums up the belief of the primitive Church by declaring Jesus "true God and of the same substance as the Father."

It would take too long to cite the texts upon which the Council bases its decision; we will select a few of the testimonies:

I. St. Clement writes to the Corinthians: "Strengthened by the viaticum of God, you heard *his word*."

II. The illustrious martyr St. Ignatius commences his letter to the Smyrnians in this manner: "I blessed Jesus Christ, the God (*τὸν Θεον*) who has given you the grace of . . . . . ." He calls himself *Θεοφόρος* "because he carries Jesus Christ in his breast."

III. St. Irenæus frequently distinguishes, "the man, the son of David, subject to sorrow; and the impassible God, the Eternal Word of the Father."

IV. According to St. Justin, Christ is God, the Son of God: *Θεὸς, Θεοῦ υἱὸς ὑπάρχων;* the Word, the first born Son of God, God himself: *Λόγος πρωτόκος ὢν τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ Θεὸς ὑπάρχει* . . . . (against Typhon).

V. Tertullian in his *Letter of Apology* is not content with affirming the belief of the Christians in him who is God, Son of God in the unity of substance; he cites the testimony of Pliny who declares to Trajan, "that he has discovered in the Christians only one remarkable thing; namely, that in their hymns they celebrate Christ as a God." In fact, says Eusebius, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, a great number of hymns composed by the first disciples

render a solemn homage to the Divinity of Christ: *τὸν Λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ, τὸν Χριστὸν ὑμνοῦσι Θεολογοῦντες.*

VI. The reproaches addressed to the first Christians by the pagans confirm these testimonies. Julian, who well knew that he had apostatized, said: "You do not cease to call Mary the Mother of God."

To these proofs of the Divinity of Christ, what reply do infidels make? Either abuse after the manner of Voltaire, or the vain abstractions of modern rationalism. *The rationalists have proved, they pretend, the impossibility of the union of the finite with the infinite.* Ever the pretence of sounding the depths of the infinite! Were this difficulty inexplicable, it would be no less necessary to admit the fact duly certified. It is the same with an infinite number of natural facts, and no one for this reason calls them in question. Nature, as well as religion, has her mysteries: we know that they exist, but how do they exist? That is the secret of God.

But if we experience difficulty in raising our minds to the comprehension of the mysterious union of the Word with human nature, there is none in justifying it. In this mystery the union of the finite and the infinite does not consist in the unity of *nature* — this absurdity belongs to the pantheists, — but in the unity of *person:* a *hypostatic union*, which in one single divine person, unites, without confounding them, without one being absorbed by the other, the divine nature and the human nature, according to the expression of the Church. Understood in this manner, the union of two reasonable

natures is more easily conceived with the infinite superiority of one over the other than with perfect equality. Besides, does man understand the union of the body with the soul, or the action of the will upon the movements of the body? This is a mystery almost as inexplicable as the union of the eternal Word with human nature. Far from being absurd, the union of the two natures in the person of the eternal Son of God, harmonizes all things in an admirable manner: as man, Jesus Christ is able to suffer; as God, He gives an infinite value to His sufferings. He meets at once both the rigorous justice and the ineffable mercy of God; justice and peace have kissed each other.

But, say the rationalists, the human conscience rejects the incarnation. Conscience! rather say egotism and pride. Yes, the narrow egotism of the human heart does not relish the idea of so much condescension on the part of God, and refuses its assent to the miracles of goodness and love which are displayed in the incarnation; the pride of man, sustained by all his evil propensities, rejects, without examination and against his conscience, the supernatural facts which impose upon him practical consequences, of which we shall have a word to say forthwith.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONCLUSION OF PART FIRST.

THE facts have spoken, and their testimony defies every reasonable objection. In this order of proofs no one can bring forward anything serious against the *Christian Revelation:* and what do philosophical subtleties weigh against the peremptory demonstration of facts?

Skeptics have understood this, and we love to collect their avowals. J. J. Rousseau, having pointed out the marks by which God reveals the true religion, such as holiness of doctrine, the authority of the preachers, the lustre of miracles, etc., attributes them to the Christian religion and concludes by these words: "It is clear that when all these signs are united, they are enough to persuade all men, the wise, the good, and the simple; all, except fools, incapable of reasoning, and the wicked who do not desire to be convinced of anything."

We have therefore *the divine fact* of our religion; not merely the theory of a divine religion, as a philosophical conquest of the human mind, but the real and proved fact of a *divine Religion:* a Religion divine in the supreme Revealer of a redemption decreed in the eternal counsels, divine in the developments preparatory to the great event, divine in its

teachings, divine in the person of the Redeemer. What conclusion shall we draw from these propositions?

I. The religion of Jesus Christ is obligatory upon all men. By its nature, this religion addresses itself to all men; all have sinned in Adam, all should be regenerated in Jesus Christ; and the Saviour himself in several places in the Gospel declares this to be of positive obligation; "he that believeth not shall be condemned." Invincible ignorance is never a crime, we know, but voluntary resistance to the voice of God and indifference in regard to what he has clearly revealed, are in manifest opposition to the first and greatest of our duties. Either God is only an empty sound, or man owes to His word not merely a barren respect, but an entire submission of his will. Sound sense here condemns the independence of reason.

II. This obligation extends to the *whole religion of Jesus Christ*. Dogmas or the moral code, impenetrable mysteries or natural facts, all that God has revealed rest upon the same authority. There are in other respects, some points of Religion more important than others; but in regard to the submission which they require, there can be no difference. To adopt some and reject others, is to make a choice (αἵρεσις) insulting to God: this is the crime and the inconsistency of heresy. Understood in this manner, the division of dogmas into fundamental points and unimportant points is an invention of modern

heretics, a last effort to maintain some semblance of religious unity.

III. The Religion of Jesus Christ must be maintained entire and *invariable*. Dogmas may, it is true, according to the established order of God, receive elucidations, worship may be embellished by accessory ceremonies, the moral code does not suffer from a change in laws purely disciplinary; but religion itself is above all variation. Everything that is of revelation or of divine institution; dogmas, sacrifice, sacraments, authority, admit neither change, progress, nor perfectibility. Let man perfect his own works, let him display in the arts and sciences the activity with which God has endowed him; all this is right and proper; but applied to the revealed religion, the *theory of progress* is the negation of revelation.

Jesus Christ yesterday and today, the same for ever and ever, Amen!

To those who are convinced without having the courage to resolve, to those who are unacquainted with the immense rewards that God reserves to religious submission, we will say with the Psalmist: *Gustate et Videte;* taste and see!

PART SECOND.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

THE FACT DIVINE.

PART SECOND.

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.

INTRODUCTION.

OUR divine Saviour came to teach the world a new law: new, in the perfection to which He carried the law revealed to the Jews; new, in the institutions which He founded and which embody the fruits of our redemption. Jesus Christ is *the way*, *the truth*, *and the life*. Dogmas to believe, examples to follow, precepts to observe, sacraments to receive: such is the divine inheritance to which all the children of Adam are invited. But *how* and on what conditions? Did Jesus Christ place this inheritance at the disposal of each of His followers without subjecting it to any rule or direction? Or did He foresee and prescribe the manner in which men are called to participate in it? Did He deliver His work to individual appreciation, or did He Himself organize and confide it to a visible authority? And if He established such an authority, with what powers is it

invested? Does this authority still exist and does it justify the intentions of its founder? These are some of the important questions that present themselves for our examination in this second part.

The simple enunciation of these questions shows us clearly that it is again necessary to study a positive *fact*, and not to construct an arbitrary *system* by the aid of a few Gospel data. Every system that is not the pure expression of the plan adopted by the divine Legislator, is radically false; however beautiful it may appear, were it even, by an impossibility, theoretically superior to the divine institution, it would nevertheless be of no value. What did the Saviour ordain? In what way and by what means did He choose to make us partakers of the treasures which He acquired for us?

Let us, therefore, return to the books which contain the details of the principal actions of the Saviour, to those historical sources — for it is thus that we should regard them here — whose veracity we have already shown.

CHAPTER I.

ORGANIZATION OF THE INFANT CHURCH.

When forming the first nucleus of His Church, Jesus placed in it the essential elements of its future organization. From the whole of His disciples, He chose twelve, most of them poor and ignorant fishermen, whom He wished, He said, to make fishers of men; "And Jesus walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea (for they were fishermen), and He saith to them: Come after Me and I will make you fishers of men."[1] What simplicity in so high a prophecy! He destined them for a work whose fruit was to be perpetuated among future generations; "You have not chosen Me: but I have chosen you, and have appointed you, that you should go, and should bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain"; and He prepared them Himself for the sublime functions of a spiritual government.

"Now, the names of the twelve Apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James, the son of Zebedee, and John his brother; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the publican; James, the son of Alpheus,

[1] Matt iv. 18, 19.

and Thaddeus; Simon the Cananean, and Judas, who betrayed his master."[1] In the place of the traitor Judas, St. Matthias was afterwards chosen and, in addition, the apostolic college recognized the extraordinary vocation of St. Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles.

Taught by their divine Master, invested with His powers, the twelve Apostles receive under His direction the training for the apostolic ministry. They do not yet possess the fullness of authority which will afterwards be intrusted to them: the presence of the divine Founder supplies every omission; but already they teach in His name, they perform miracles in virtue of the mission received from Him; and, under His supreme authority, they afford us an example of their future union under the Vicar whom He will be pleased to designate.

"And when He had called His twelve disciples together, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of diseases, and all manner of sickness. . . . . ." He then sent them and gave them the following instructions: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles; and into the cities of the Samaritans enter not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. And going preach, saying: The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils."[2]

"The Apostles went about through the towns, preaching the Gospel and healing everywhere."[3]

[1] Matt. x. 2, 3, 4. [2] Matt. x. 1–8. [3] Luke ix. 6.

Everywhere, that is to say, where Jesus sent them, among the lost sheep of the house of Israel. For, before being preached to heathen nations, the Gospel was to be announced to the people who had received the deposit of the word of God, according to the expression of St. Paul to the Romans.[1] This is a final favor to the chosen people.

To the *powers* with which He invests the Apostles, Jesus adds instructions upon the manner of exercising their holy functions. We select the most instructive passages.

"Gratis you have received, gratis give. Do not possess gold, nor silver, nor money in your purses . . . . . the workman is worthy of his meat.

"And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your word, going forth out of that house, or city, shake off the dust from your feet. Amen I say to you, it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha, in the day of judgment, than for that city.

"Behold, I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves; be ye, therefore, wise as serpents, and simple as doves. . . . . .

"But when they shall deliver you up, be not thoughtful how or what to speak: for it shall be given you in that hour what to speak. For it is not you that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you. . . . . And you shall be hated by all men for My name's sake; but he that shall persevere unto the end, he shall be saved.

[1] Rom. iii. 2.

"And when they shall persecute you in this city, flee into another. . . . . The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his Lord. . . . . If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household? . . . And fear not those that kill the body, and cannot kill the soul; but rather fear him that can destroy both body and soul in hell. . . . . .

"Whosoever, therefore, shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father, who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father, who is in heaven. . . . .

"He that loveth father or mother more than Me, is not worthy of Me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me, is not worthy of Me. And he that taketh not up his cross, and followeth Me, is not worthy of Me. . . . .

"He that receiveth you, receiveth Me: and he that receiveth Me, receiveth Him that sent Me. . . . And whosoever shall give to drink to one of these little ones, only a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple, amen, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward."[1]

Not content with having designated the future depositaries of His authority, Jesus seems to have indicated in the auxiliaries of the Apostles the different degrees of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. In fact, some time after, says St. Luke[2] "the Lord appointed also other seventy-two disciples: and He sent them

[1] Matt. x. [2] Luke x.

two and two before His face, into every city and place, whither He Himself was to come. And He said to them: The harvest, indeed, is great, but the laborers are few. Pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, that He send laborers into His harvest."

The disciples go forth, command the devils in the name of Jesus and return full of joy at their success.

Jesus surrounded by the apostolic college, assisted by the seventy-two disciples, endeavors to bring back to the fold of the divine shepherd the lost sheep of Israel: behold then the Church at its first beginning. Already we perceive the design of its divine Founder. He teaches, He governs, He delegates His authority in different degrees: His messengers preach what they have learned from Him, prove their mission by miracles and return to give Him an account of their labors. There is in these facts a veritable *organization*, which consecrated by the example of the divine Master, would serve as a model in His Church, even if He had left no instructions upon this point; but He gave the most explicit instructions, as we shall now see.

CHAPTER II.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY.

JESUS Christ is by Himself and by a title peculiarly His own, the head of the children of God assembled in His name, the supreme legislator of the Church which He purchased at the price of His blood. Upon the impregnable foundation of His divine authority rests the whole edifice of His Church, as upon the corner-stone predicted by the prophets.[1] Woe to him who comes into collision with that stone! He shall be broken, says the Saviour Himself, and ground to powder. "Jesus saith to them: Have you never read in the Scriptures: The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? By the Lord this hath been done: and it is wonderful in our eyes. Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and shall be given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone, shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."[2] To build anything outside of this foundation, would be to build upon the sand an edifice without stability; a sacrilegious undertaking con-

[1] Ps. cxvii.; Is. xxviii. [2] Matt. xxi. 42, 43, 44.

demned in advance by the Master and His disciples. "For no one can lay another foundation, but that which is laid: which is Christ Jesus." [1]

But Jesus Christ would one day cease to be visible to His Church, and how would He then continue to exercise His authority? He foresaw and provided for this a long time in advance; and as it was the main feature of His work, He promulgates His regulations in the clearest and most solemn manner, and on several occasions enforces them upon his Apostles. In fact,

I. Open the Gospel of St. Matthew, at the sixteenth chapter: — "One day being on the confines of Cæsarea, Jesus asked His disciples, saying: Whom do men say that the Son of man is? And they said: Some say that Thou art John the Baptist; others Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. Jesus saith to them: But whom do you say that I am? Simon Peter answering, said: Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God."

Peter had confessed His Divinity and consequently His supreme authority: this is the solemn moment that Jesus chose to designate His vicar and promise him the *investiture of the supreme authority* in His Church. And in order to render this promise more emphatic, He recalls and confirms the mysterious name of *Peter* which He had before given him and applies to him the figurative appellation by which He is Himself designated as the foundation of the Church.

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 11.

"And Jesus answering, said to him: Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but My Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church; and the gates (powers) of hell shall not prevail against it."[1]

This is not all: Jesus enunciates the powers which He confides to him in the most absolute terms: "And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven."[2]

II. But will not Peter lose his rights by his infidelity on the day of our Saviour's passion? By no means: it is precisely at the moment when Jesus foresees and predicts his fall that He renews to him the special assurance of the highest prerogative of the spiritual authority: this assurance was that his faith should not fail and that he should confirm his brethren.[3]

III. Lastly, all these promises are definitively ratified after the Saviour's resurrection. During the

[1] *Et ego dico tibi quia tu es Petrus es super hanc petram ædificabo Ecclesiam meam, et portæ inferi non prævalebunt adversus eam.*

[2] *Et tibi dabo claves regni cœlorum: et quodcunque ligaveris super terram, erit ligatum et in cœlis; et quodcunque solveris super terram, erit solutum et in cœlis.*

[3] *Simon, Simon, ecce Satanas expetivit vos ut cribaret sicut triticum; Ego autem rogavi pro te ut non deficiat fides tua: et tu aliquando conversus confirma fratres tuos.* S. Luca. cap.xxii. 31,32.

forty days which Jesus specially devoted to the regulation of the constitution and government of His Church;[1] three times He delegated to Peter the sovereign authority with the duty of *feeding His lambs, and His sheep.*[2]

IV. Elsewhere the Saviour addresses Himself to all the Apostles and commits His authority to them in the most explicit terms. To show His intention clearly, He begins by recalling to their minds that: "All power is given to Me in heaven and in earth." Then He proceeds: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." To this exercise of authority and ministry, He promises as a *supreme guarantee*, His perpetual assistance: "And behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."[3]

V. Do you desire to have a still more ample idea of the spiritual power of the Apostles? "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you. When He had said this, He breathed on them: and He said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."[4]

[1] Acts i. 3. [2] John xxi. 15, 16, 17.

[3] *Euntes docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos in nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus sancti: docentes eos servare omnia quæcunque mandavi vobis; et ecce ego vobiscum sum omnibus diebus, usque ad consummationem sæculi.* S. Matth. xxviii. 19, 20.

[4] *Sicut misit me Pater, et ego mitto vos. Hæc cum dixisset,*

The passages just cited are by their clearness above all sophistry. However, were it required to support them by a sure and unquestionable interpretation, we possess it in the writings and conduct of the Apostles themselves. Fortified by the word of their divine Master, they impose their teaching in an absolute manner (all their writings prove this); they condemn every contrary doctrine from whatever source it may originate (St. Paul to the Galatians and Corinthians); they decide controverted points with sovereign authority and in the name of the Holy Ghost (Acts of the Apostles); they reprove, punish, and when necessary, excommunicate the obstinate (St. Paul to the Corinthians and to Timothy); they derive from their authority all their communications of power, even when they established Bishops, intrusted, as they declare, by the Holy Ghost with the government of the Church of God:[1] in a word, they claim and exercise by word of mouth and by writing, the plentitude of the divine authority with which they are invested.

"It is indisputable," says a Protestant historian (M. Guizot, *Civilisation en France*), "that the first founders, or rather the first instruments in the foundation of Christianity, the Apostles, regarded themselves as intrusted with a special mission, received from above, and in turn transmitted to their disciples,

insufflavit: et dixit eis: Accipite Spiritum sanctum: quorum remiseritis peccata, remittuntur eis: et quorum retinueritis, retenta sunt. S. Joan xx. 21, 22, 23.

[1] Acts xx. 28.

by the imposition of hands or by some other form the right of preaching and teaching. Ordination is a primitive fact in the Christian Church. Thence is derived an order of priests, a clergy distinct, permanent, and invested with particular functions and rights." This admission is valuable.

Independently of these testimonies, all documents whether contemporary or subsequent, exhibit to us the *historical fact* that the Church has been constantly and from the beginning governed by an authority which owes its origin to divine institution. The accessory forms of this authority were developed with the progress of the Church; its action was for a time impeded (and this is all that M. Guizot and others have succeeded in proving), but the principle of authority has ever remained the same; and such as we see it exercised in the Catholic Church of the nineteenth century, such was it described under the sword of the first persecutors by Saint Ignatius martyr, in his *Letters* acknowledged to be authentic at the present day; by St. Irenæus in his *Treatise against Heresies;* and by all the Fathers of the primitive Church. It would be labor in vain to attempt to deny the evidence of this fact; obliged to acknowledge it, Gibbon, a historian by no means well disposed towards Christianity, regards it as a serious injury to the Church and a reproach to the pastors of primitive times, especially to Saint Cyprian, that they required an excessive submission to their authority. "Without this submission," says St. Cyprian, "it is all over with the

divine power which governs the Church, it is all over with Christianity." The fact is, therefore, proved, and let us bear it in mind, it includes in favor of the Catholic thesis this decisive argument: either the work of Jesus Christ was perverted from the beginning (an absurd and injurious supposition), or the authority of the Church is of divine institution.

We will add, that the principle of authority was the *necessary condition of religious unity.* Jesus Christ desired that His disciples should be one in Him, as He is one with His Father, one consequently not only in exterior forms, and in the bonds of charity, but above all, in religious belief, in the agreement of reasonable intelligences. "*Unus Dominus, una fides, unum baptisma:* One Lord, one faith, one baptism": [1] this should be the device of all Christians. "To maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," [2] should be the object of their solicitude. Nothing is oftener or more emphatically recommended. Now, how shall this unity of minds be maintained upon points of doctrine that are often elevated above human reason, without a sovereign and unquestionable authority? Reason teaches us that it is impossible, and experience shows us, in all who have tried it, divisions and variations without end. Was eternal wisdom therefore wanting in foresight? Would it have required unity without any means of preserving it? Would it have permitted its work of predilection to perish? No, no; it provided for it in the most efficacious manner, by

[1] Ephes. iv. 5. [2] Ephes. iv. 3.

an institution eminently adapted to our nature; an institution at once capable of restraining the learned and satisfying the ignorant. "In authority alone," says St. Augustine, "all possess an easy and simple way."

We conclude, therefore, that to belong to Jesus Christ we must admit the institution of religious authority as the fundamental principle of the organization of His Church, and reject as false and impious every religious system which rests upon *individual independence* and upon *free examination* understood in the sense of modern innovators.

CHAPTER III.

SEAT OF RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY.

RELIGIOUS authority must necessarily reside in those upon whom Jesus Christ conferred it: *St. Peter and his colleagues in the apostleship.* This clearly appears from the very words which we have adduced concerning its establishment. The Saviour establishes no vague system of authority, which men can afterwards explain and apply according to their caprice; He makes no mention of temporal powers, He speaks of the whole of His disciples only to subject them to authority; and this authority He expressly confides at one time to St. Peter alone, and at another time to all the Apostles. Behold then the only depositaries of His powers, charged with the duty of instructing and governing all those who believe in Him, of binding and releasing by definitive sentence upon everything relating to the eternal interests of man. "As My Father hath sent Me, I also send you": "We cannot find," says Bossuet,[1] "a power better established or a mission more direct."

At the head of the apostolic college is placed St. Peter. This prerogative is not a simple title of honor, but a supreme power, a true *primacy of authority* in the Church of Jesus Christ. In fact:

[1] *Discours sur l'unité de l'Eglise.*

I. The expressions used by the divine Founder admit of no other explanation. If St. Peter possesses *the keys of the kingdom of heaven*, if he is the *rock upon which is built the Church* whose solidity will render it *victorious over all the attacks of hell*, if he has *all power of binding and loosing*, if he is intrusted with the duty of *confirming his brethren in the faith and of feeding his sheep and lambs*, why is he not the supreme head of the Church? What other expressions can we conceive more energetic or more absolute? Now, it is to St. Peter and to him alone that Jesus commits these united powers, and to leave us no doubt upon this point, He designates Peter personally and by the new name that He had given him; it is only one who speaks to one; Jesus Christ Son of God to Simon son of Jonas; Jesus Christ who is the true Rock firm of itself to Simon who is only a Rock (Peter) by the force which Jesus communicates to him; it is to him that Jesus Christ speaks, and while speaking to him He acts on him and imparts to him the character of His firmness." "And I say to thee: thou art Peter"; and continues He, "upon this rock I will build My Church"; and, He concludes, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Bossuet, from whom we borrow this beautiful commentary,[1] continues speaking of the keys which designate the authority of government: "Everything is subject to these keys, everything, my brethren, kings and peoples, pastors and flocks. . . . . It is Peter who is first commanded to

[1] *Discours sur l'unitè de l'Eglise.*

love him more than all the other Apostles, and afterwards to *feed* and govern all, both the *lambs* and the *sheep*, both the young and their mothers, and the shepherds themselves: shepherds with regard to the people, and sheep with regard to Peter, they honor Jesus Christ in him."

II. The difference between the powers of Peter and those of the other Apostles, is clearly established by the same text. We there see clearly "the design of first conferring upon one alone what He (Jesus Christ) subsequently designed to confer upon several; but the beginning is not destroyed by what follows and the first does not lose his place. This first word: *Whatsoever thou shalt bind*, spoken to one alone, has already brought under his power each of those to whom it will be said: *Whatsoever you shall remit:* for the promises of Jesus Christ as well as His gifts are without repentance; whatever is given once indefinitely and universally is irrevocable. The power given to several carries its restriction in its division; while the power given to one alone, and over all, and without exception, carries with it plenitude." Thus Bossuet speaks, or rather he expresses the doctrine of St. Cyprian upon the unity of the Church; of St. Augustine[1] and of the other Fathers who explain the words of Jesus Christ to St. Peter in the sense of the *plenitude of apostolic power*.

III. The divine prerogative of St. Peter appears even in the simplest details. From the beginning among the twelve Apostles the *first is Simon sur-*

[1] 124th *Treatise upon St. John.*

named Peter,[1] and afterwards, says Bossuet, "he appeared the first in all cases: the first to confess the faith;[2] the first of all the Apostles who saw Jesus Christ after His resurrection,[3] as he was the first witness before all the people;[4] the first when it was necessary to complete the number of the Apostles;[5] the first to confirm the faith by a miracle;[6] the first to convert the Jews;[7] the first to receive the Gentiles;[8] the first everywhere; but I cannot relate all. Everything concurs to establish his primacy. Everything, even his faults."

IV. Such is also the unanimous doctrine of the holy Fathers, of the general Councils, in a word, of all Christian antiquity. The most illustrious interpreters of the constitution of the Church are not content with proving the primacy of St. Peter and his pre-eminence of authority over the other Apostles, they recognize at the same time on the part of the divine lawgiver the design of providing the unity of the whole body by the unity of the supreme head of the Church. We select a few citations.

"The primacy was conferred on Peter," says St. Cyprian, "in order to show the unity of the Church." And again: "The chair of Peter is the foundation of sacerdotal unity."[9]

We cite St. Cyprian by preference because he belongs to the first age of the Church and because heretics have sought to take advantage of some of his expressions.

[1] Matt. x. [2] Matt. xvi. 16. [3] 1 Cor. xv. 5.
[4] Acts ii. 14. [5] Acts i. 15. [6] Acts iii. 6, 7.
[7] Acts ii. [8] Acts x. [9] De unit. Eccl.

St. Jerome:[1] "Although the strength and solidity of the Church rest equally upon all the Apostles, yet one only among the twelve is specially chosen in order to render all schism impossible." How impossible, if it is not by a superiority of authority which subjects the whole Church to Peter? "It is, in fact, over the entire universe," says St. John Chrysostom, "that the spiritual power of the prince of the Apostles extends." Wherefore St. Ambrose arrives at the celebrated conclusion: "where Peter is, there is the Church."[2]

The authority conferred upon St. Peter was not a personal privilege that was to end with him, but a prerogative essentially connected with the constitution of the Church, a prerogative which was to be transmitted and perpetuated in *his legitimate successors.*

This proposition is an evident consequence,

I. Of the promise of Jesus Christ to insure the stability of the Church by the solidity of the foundation (*Peter*, a rock) upon which He built it, and of being with His Apostles until the consummation of the world;

II. *Of the very nature of the Church*, which is a moral body, an enduring institution, in view of which the authority of St. Peter and of the Apostles was established. "That which is to serve as a support to an eternal Church, can have no end."[3]

[1] *Contra Jovinianum*, I.
[2] *Ubi ergo Petrus, ibi Ecclesia.* Com. in Ps. iv.
[3] Bossuet, *sur l'unité.*

III. *Of the necessity of maintaining the unity* of this body, a necessity still more urgent since the death of the first disciples of Jesus Christ.

The primacy of the prince of the Apostles constitutes an essential part of the form which the divine Founder gave to His Church; it is therefore necessary, as St. Leo expresses himself, *that Peter should ever live in his successors*, and that all important decisions should rest upon the authority of Peter and be adopted in the name of Peter as the Councils speak: *Vice Petri.* "Since it was the counsel of God," says Bossuet,[1] "to permit the rise of schisms and heresies, the Church had no constitution more firm to maintain herself nor more powerful to subdue them."

Thus transmitted, the supreme authority of St. Peter, the universal primacy, resides and will continue to reside in the Roman Pontiffs. In fact,

I. Peter, after having exercised his ministry at Jerusalem and at Antioch, fixed his seat at Rome and there suffered martyrdom: this is an historical fact attested by writers of the first centuries, existing as it were before our eyes in ancient monuments and in the very series of successors in the apostolic chair. We have the catalogue of the first Roman Pontiffs in the writings of Tertullian, St. Cyprian, St. Irenæus, and others, who from this fact unanimously draw this conclusion: these Pontiffs, legitimate successors of St. Peter, received his august inheritance; the episcopate of Rome is henceforth

[1] *Sur l'unité.*

inseparable from the supreme authority in the Church of Jesus Christ.

II. This is that Roman chair so much celebrated by the Fathers, who emulated each other in extolling the sovereignty of the apostolic chair, the chief sovereignty, the source of unity, and in the place of Peter the exalted degree of the sacerdotal chair; the Mother Church who holds in her hand the direction of all the other churches; the head of the episcopate whence issues the ray of government; the principal chair, the only chair, in which alone all preserve unity. You hear in these words St. Optatus, St. Augustine, St. Cyprian, St. Irenæus, St. Prosper, St. Avitus, St. Theodoret, the Council of Chalcedon and others; Africa, Gaul, Greece, Asia; the East and the West united together."

Thus Bossuet expresses himself, forced by the evidence of testimony, at the time when France strove by unworthy subterfuges, to restrain the authority of the Pope; thus the Greeks at the Council of Florence were compelled to acknowledge the *universal supremacy of the Roman Pontiff.* Similar admissions are found even in the writings of both German and English innovators of the sixteenth century, and in the liturgical books of the Russian Church.[1]

[1] See the work of the Count de Maistre: *Du Pape, et les ménées ecclésiastiques* for the feasts of SS. Gregory the Great, Leo, Sylvester, etc. We read there on the eighteenth of February that "our Lord intrusted to Peter the conduct of the universe." and again that "St. Leo in his quality of successor of Peter was enriched with the supremacy."

III. These testimonies have a thousand times received a decisive confirmation by the most solemn acts: acts of supremacy on the part of the Roman Pontiffs, acts of appeal and submission on the part of the highest dignitaries of other churches. Thus to cite a few facts of the primitive churches, St. Clement (Pope) corrects the abuses which had crept into the Church of Corinth; Pope Victor exercises the same right in the Church of Ephesus; Pope Stephen over the African Church; St. Denis, Pope, in the third century orders the patriarch of Alexandria to present himself before him to give an explanation concerning his faith which was impeached by the Orientals, and the venerable patriarch did not hesitate a moment to obey. When St. Athanasius was dispossessed of his see by the Arians, Pope Julius cited the adverse parties to appear before his tribunal, and both sides hastened to submit to his decision. St. John Chrysostom having been unjustly deposed, wrote to Pope Stephen to appeal to his decision. In a word, all difficult questions, all important causes are referred to the judgment of the Holy See, and *when Rome spoke*, all discussion ceased, according to the expression of St. Augustine: *Roma locuta est, causa finita est.* Such is the rule, and notwithstanding some trifling disputes, it was constantly followed, not only in regard to the highest authorities separately considered, both in the East and in the West, but even in regard to the bishops united in Council.

Pope St. Leo had written to the council of Chal-

cedon: "It is not a question for discussion, but for belief, my letter having decided all that is of faith upon the mystery of the Incarnation"; and six hundred bishops, mostly from the East unanimously replied: "Let him be anathema who does not admit this belief; Peter has spoken by the mouth of Leo, Peter lives ever in his Church." The same Council had issued a decree which raised the bishop of Constantinople to the second rank in the Church; the Pope annulled the decree, and that was the end of it.

The argument here presented would be sufficient of itself to prove the supremacy of the Pope: the constant practice of the Church upon a point of this importance could only come from divine institution, and Jesus Christ Himself could not have permitted His Church to be constantly altered in its essential form.

The most complete authority in the Church of Jesus Christ, is that which represents Peter surrounded by the apostolic college: The Pope at the head of the bishops, either assembled in Council, or dispersed throughout the world, but always united to him, in spirit and in will.

The episcopate is the continuation of the apostolate; but each bishop governs only one particular Church and acts only in a determined jurisdiction whilst the authority of the Apostles extended to the whole earth. The Epistles to Titus and to Timothy and the first chapters of the Apocalypse show us clearly at the head of each Church a first pastor charged with the care of the whole flock. He is

sometimes called *priest*, it is true, and the Apostles themselves have taken the title of *priest;* but his pre-eminence is not the less marked by special attributes, and in the ecclesiastical archives, care was always taken to record the series of successive bishops of each Church. "To the supreme pastor who is bishop," says Tertullian (*de Baptis.*), "belongs the right of administering baptism, then to the priests and to the deacons authorized by the bishops." "Obey ye all your bishops," writes St. Ignatius of Antioch, "as Jesus obeyed His Father, and obey ye the priests as the Apostles. . . . ." Thus speak St. Cyprian, St. Irenæus and all the primitive Church. The episcopal authority, far from being a posterior usurpation, as certain heretics have pretended, is a divine right of apostolic succession recognized by the Apostles, and a fact established by the documents of the first ages.

The facts which we have just examined open to every man of good will a direct and luminous way which cannot lead him astray; they establish an easy and infallible rule to discern the truth from error in religious matters. Everything that is not with the successor of St. Peter, is not with Jesus Christ, and everything that is not with Jesus Christ has no part in His promises. "To confound all those who in any manner whatever teach an erroneous doctrine," says St. Irenæus (*contra Hæres.*), "it is sufficient to oppose to them the faith and the tradition transmitted by an uninterrupted succession of Pontiffs (whom he enumerates) in the Roman Church, the

first and most eminent of Churches, founded and established by the glorious Apostles Peter and Paul. For to this Church on account of its supreme authority, should be united all other Churches, all the Christians of the entire world."

To be united to the apostolic See, to adopt what it adopts, to reject what it rejects, to rally on every occasion around this center of religious unity: behold therefore for an humble and upright heart the most consoling assurance as well as the most indispensable duty.

CHAPTER IV.

PREROGATIVES OF THE AUTHORITY ESTABLISHED BY JESUS CHRIST.

In examining the prerogatives of the religious authority, we do not pretend to determine what belongs to each degree of the ecclesiastical hierarchy: these details belong to special studies; we shall consider the general idea of authority in the fullness of its attributes and in the essential relations which exist between it and all the members of the Church. Now, this authority embraces all the spiritual interests of man. Infallible depositary of the divine teachings, it defines points of doctrine; dispenser of the treasures due to the infinite merits of the Man-God, it directs their application; regulator of the spiritual conduct of the disciples of Jesus Christ, it governs them with sovereign authority in everything that regards the service of God. Let authority define its dogmas or publish its laws, let it teach or command; we owe it a perfect submission of mind and heart: *belief* in its doctrinal decisions, *obedience* to its commands. We will explain these two points.

Belief in its doctrinal decisions.

The most prominent feature of the authority established by Jesus Christ, is that it is a "teaching authority." Teaching is its first duty, as it is its

highest prerogative. But in order that adherence to this teaching may be reasonable, especially when the object of the teaching surpasses our natural lights, as it does in all that pertains to the mysteries of the Holy Trinity, the Incarnation of the Word, the operations of grace, etc., it is necessary that the authority which teaches us shall have received from above the absolute certainty of never deceiving us, in a word, "infallibility in religious matters." Now this is the sublime privilege of the authority which teaches us.

Let us sum up the proofs that establish this capital point.

I. In establishing the religious authority, Jesus Christ guaranteed to it at the same time infallibility. In fact, in the texts just cited, He elevates the mission of the Apostles to the height of His own mission, since He sends them "as His Father hath sent Him"; He commands them to teach *all nations* and to teach them *all* things which He intrusted to them, and in this teaching He will be with them, *all days* without interruption "even to the end of the world"; and it is in view of this mission that He promises them the coming of the Holy Ghost "who will teach them all truth, and who will abide with them forever." How can these words be true if their teaching err one single day, or in one single point? Peter in particular received the mission of "confirming his brethren in the faith," and the formal assurance that the gates of hell should not prevail against the Church of which he is the foundation:

what would become of these promises if error could creep into the Apostolic chair?

II. The obligation of believing what this authority teaches does not result merely from the mission conferred upon the Apostles; Jesus Christ by an express declaration made it a formal precept: "he that heareth you heareth Me, and he that despiseth you despiseth Me"; and again: "he that believeth not (in your preaching) shall be condemned"; and again: "If any one will not hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen and a publican." In imposing so formal an obligation under pain of damnation, Eternal Wisdom necessarily excludes all danger of error. A sovereign authority in matters of supernatural faith, to be just, must be infallible.

III. The Apostles fulfilled this part of their mission, as they had received it. Without paying attention to the philosophical subtleties which they declared to be dangerous (St. Paul to Timothy and elsewhere), they impose their doctrine in the name of Jesus Christ, and with an authority that admits of no resistance. They declare every contrary doctrine false and pernicious: "Though an angel from heaven," said St. Paul to the Galatians,[1] "preach a gospel to you beside that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema." In regard to those who by obstinacy in their vain disputes have lost the faith, they are "delivered to Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.[2] If they preach a doctrine different from that of the Apostles, we should "avoid

[1] Gal. i. 8. [2] I Tim. i. 20.

them as pests and not even address a word to them.[1] What does this mean, but that the Apostles teach with an infallible authority and that "The Church is," as St. Paul says, "the pillar and ground of truth: *Ecclesia Dei vivi, columna et firmamentum veritatis.*"[2] If this is so, the Apostle is right in commanding the faithful to obey the faith,[3] to bring their intelligence into captivity in order to subject it to Christ,[4] and to be on their guard against vain babblers, who in the course of time will endeavor to disturb their faith, by overthrowing the whole economy of the divine institutions.[5]

IV. For the successors of the Apostles, doctrinal infallibility is a point clearly decided by the will of the divine lawgiver and inseparable from the idea of religious unity. Whether they treat of the Church in general, or whether they examine the extent of the powers conferred on the Roman Pontiffs, they affirm or suppose infallibility. This clearly appears at the appearance of any suspicious doctrine. Then Rome is consulted, then the faithful gather around the chair "where Peter ever living communicates the truth," according to St. Peter Chrysologus; "where error has no access," according to St. Cyprian: as soon as Peter has spoken by his successor, there are only obedient faithful and obstinate heretics. The history of the Church is the perpetual exercise of her infallible authority. Bishops may have discussed the conditions required to constitute

[1] 2 John i. 10. [2] 1 Tim. iii. 15. [3] Rom. i.
[4] 2 Cor. x. 5. [5] 2 Tim. iii.

a definitive judgment; but they have never doubted the infallibility of the doctrinal decisions emanating from the plenitude of ecclesiastical authority. Such are not only the decisions of a general Council, but also those of the Roman Pontiff when he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, when fulfilling his office of Pastor and Doctor of all Christians, in virtue of his supreme apostolic authority he defines that a doctrine should be held by the universal Church.

In regard to personal opinions which the Pope like any other philosopher or theologian, may express "in his private name," no one has ever thought of transforming them into dogmas of obligation or infallible oracles.

The objections urged against the thesis of the infallibility of the spiritual authority are not so much the arguments of reason as they are the revolts of human pride. Faith in the decisions of the Church implies the submission of the understanding, and this submission in the eyes of freethinkers, is a degradation of the human intellect, and a tyranny on the part of the Church. Were this objection true, it would not affect the proofs which we have advanced in favor of authority: but it is not even in harmony with reason whose rights it claims to defend. In fact,

I. It is by the use of my reason that I discover that an infallible authority is of divine institution; consequently it is not to a human intelligence that I subject my reason, but to Eternal Wisdom, and in this submission instead of surrendering my natural

lights, I learn truths to which my intellect, left to itself, could not attain. What can be more noble or more reasonable?

II. If I examine the nature of religion on the one hand, and of the human understanding on the other, again reason pronounces in favor of an infallible authority. What is a religion without unity, the fundamental unity of one uniform belief? How can unity in belief be maintained without an authority whose decisions are peremptory and without appeal, and consequently of strict obligation? Now, this authority will be infallible or not: if, without being infallible, it nevertheless imposes itself on the reason and conscience, it is tyrannical in effect and degrading to inferiors: to be conformable to our reason and dignity, it must be infallible.

To doctrinal infallibility the Church joins the *spiritual government* which demands on the part of her members *obedience to her precepts*. The power of binding and releasing, the obligation of feeding the flock in the sense of the word ποιμαίνειν employed by the Gospel, and so many texts which it would be superfluous to reproduce, express the complete idea of the spiritual government. All the legislative measures to be adopted by Peter and his successors are in advance ratified in Heaven, without assigning to the legislator other limits than his conscience, or other rules than the edification of the Church.

United and submissive to their head, all the Apostles are ministers of Jesus Christ, and take part in the government of the Church. They not only exer-

cise this authority themselves, but they communicate it again to the bishops whom they associate in their divine functions, and they rest it expressly upon the divine institution. Thenceforward the Acts of the Apostles and the canonical Epistles present us the picture of a regular government, with all its acts of administration. Laws imposed in the name of the Holy Ghost, distribution of functions, visitations of the churches, repression of abuses, punishment, and when necessary, the excommunication of the guilty: everything is here, and everything is executed in that spirit of meekness which the divine Founder recommended to His ministers, and which in the course of time will be a distinctive feature in the government of His Church.

It is, therefore, very certain that the Church has, by divine institution a "government independent of all temporal power," and that this government belongs to the successors of St. Peter and the Apostles. This does not imply that a ruler of the Church may not at the same time be the chief of a certain principality; but the temporal sovereign, as such, possesses no authority over the Church; he can interfere in the affairs of the Church only as the ecclesiastical authority chooses to permit for the good of the community: "Do not imagine," said St. Ambrose to Valentinian, "that the imperial power gives you any right over divine things." "To you the empire," said Osius to Constantius, "to us the Church; such is the arrangement of God."

It belongs therefore to no human power to annul

the decrees of the Church. Far from it: kings and emperors, sovereigns in the temporal order, are subjects in the spiritual order and owe to the Church an obedience the more complete, as their example exercises a greater influence. This the Fathers of the Church ceased not to repeat to them. Moreover, whatever they do, the binding force of the decrees of ecclesiastical authority subsists of itself, even when the temporal power becomes hostile or indifferent to it. This indifference frees from compulsion; but the obedience to these decrees is more free, and hence more noble and generous. It would be superfluous to insist upon the practical importance of this truth in the actual situation of the Church.

Let us not confound the laws of the Church with its doctrinal decisions, or in other words *discipline* with faith. Faith is invariable as the truth is one; but discipline can and should be adapted to the necessities of the time. Over whatever is of revealed truth or positive divine institution the Church has no power properly speaking, but only an infallible authority of interpretation and conservation; while she disposes supremely of laws purely disciplinary which are her work. In virtue of her power of government, she modifies them, abrogates them, substitutes others in their stead, always in view of the spiritual good of her children. For want of observing a distinction so elementary, how many ridiculous reproaches have been applied to the authority of the Church!

CHAPTER V.

THE TWO-FOLD DEPOSIT COMMITTED TO THE CHURCH.

We have seen that the Church received the mission of teaching all revealed truths, with the divine guarantee of perpetual infallibility. But here arises an important question: Whence does she derive what she teaches? Does she receive from age to age new revelations to communicate to the world? To reply to the second question first; No, the Church receives no new revelations, her mission is not to add to the Christian revelation; she is only its faithful depositary and infallible interpreter; what she decides, what she declares to be dogmas of faith has never ceased to form part of the deposit committed to her care. And this deposit of faith she holds from the Apostles the same as they received it from Jesus Christ. What the Church teaches is the "Apostolic teaching." Now the Apostles taught sometimes by word of mouth, sometimes by writing: under whatever form it may be, what they taught forms part of the divine revelation, and consequently the deposit committed to the Church comprises the *holy scriptures and the apostolic traditions.*

This simple statement, deduced from the facts laid down by Jesus Christ and the Apostles, is of a

nature to satisfy every sincere mind; but pride revolting against the judgments of the Church strove to embroil the question, and heretics have falsified the idea of the deposit committed to the Church. The authority of the Church embarrasses them, and the apostolic tradition supposes the existence of this authority: they have, therefore, rejected both and depend exclusively on the Holy Scriptures, on the Bible submitted to private interpretation. The effect of this was to deny an institution clearly contained in the Bible itself, and open the door to the most divergent interpretations and render unity of belief impossible; no matter: "the Bible, nothing but the Bible, with free examination!" Such was the battle-cry of proud innovators. Without repeating our former arguments which have refuted the principle of this system in advance, let us endeavor to restore to the two-fold deposit committed to the Church the character assigned to it by facts in harmony with the divine institution.

The Church recognizes in the Holy Scriptures, or the Bible, "the word of God," that is, a book written under divine inspiration. She pronounces on the canonicity of the different parts of the sacred text, adopting some, rejecting others, as she has done since the first century. In all this, the Church makes use of her sovereign and infallible authority, not to raise herself above the word of God, but to maintain the integrity and the purity of a trust confided to her care. Thus everything forms a connected whole. The Gospel as a historical document has served to

demonstrate the authority of the Church: once demonstrated and accepted, authority teaches us to admit the Gospel as a divine book. What can be more logical?

Heretics, those at least whose variations have not carried them to extremes, admit also the divine inspiration of the Holy Scriptures; but upon what authority? Upon the authority of the Church from which they received them? Then they acknowledge this authority with the Catholics. Upon human authority? But this is radically incapable of enlightening us upon the "supernatural character" of a text: it only makes known to us the historical value of the Bible, as we have established it ourselves to demonstrate the facts of the divine institutions. If you accept the Bible as a divine book, without acknowledging the visible and living authority of the Church, you admit gratuitously, and without proofs the divinity of the Bible; or, if you attempt to prove it, you will prove it by itself, by supposing precisely what is in question. "Without tradition," says St. Basil, "the Gospel is only a vain word." According to St. Augustine: "The Gospel is for us a divine book, only because the authority of the Catholic Church guarantees its divinity to us": *Ego vero evangelio non crederem nisi me Catholicæ Ecclesiæ commoveret auctoritas.* Faith in the infallible authority of the Church should logically precede faith in the inspiration of the Bible.

We add that historically also, "the establishment and even the exercise of ecclesiastical authority pre-

ceded all of the New Testament." In fact there existed neither Gospel nor Apostolic Epistle, when the Apostles, invested with their mission, not to write but to teach, preached the heavenly doctrine, governed the Church, and demanded an absolute faith in their teaching: in a teaching purely oral! It was only after a number of years, when the number of the faithful had increased, that some of the Apostles committed to writing the most memorable actions of the Saviour, together with dogmatic and moral instructions. Before as well as after these writings, the Church existed in its essential form, provided with everything requisite for its eternal duration. The Anglican doctors of Oxford with all antiquity acknowledge this, and proclaimed it twenty years ago in their celebrated tracts and in their sermons to the people.

Finally, and this completely subverts the system which we oppose, the Apostles themselves instead of writing a complete treatise of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, declare that their teaching is not recorded entire in the Bible and that there are truths to be preserved by tradition in the Church. "Hold the traditions," says St. Paul to the Thessalonians, "which you have learned, whether by word or by our Epistle."[1] "And the things which thou hast heard from me, before many witnesses," says he to Timothy, "the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also. . . ."[2] "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned,

[1] 2 Thess. ii. 14. [2] 2 Tim. ii. 2.

and which have been committed to thee; knowing of whom thou hast learned."[1] St. John excuses himself for recording only a small portion of the words and actions of Jesus Christ, and in his letter he declares that he reserves what remains for him to say until the time when he can relate it by word of mouth. Moreover, the writings of the Apostles as well as other parts of the Bible contain many obscure passages, and St. Peter takes care to warn the faithful against the abuse of certain arbitrary interpretations. In a word, the Apostles far from having in view the teaching by writing of a completely defined creed, constantly assume a pre-existing teaching which was to be perpetuated by the living authority of the Church of Jesus Christ.

This is not all: the first Fathers of the Church recognized the existence of apostolic traditions, and constantly opposed them to heresy as an unanswerable argument. This is the dominant idea of Tertullian's *Book of Prescriptions*, and of the *Treatise against Heresies* of St. Irenæus. The latter particularly insists upon the deposit committed to the Roman Church and upon the faithful transmission of the truth in the chair of St. Peter. Had it been otherwise, "how would it have been with that multitude of barbarous nations," who according to the same Father, "believed in Jesus Christ without paper and without ink, and carried their salvation written in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, remaining strictly faithful to the ancient tradition"? We con-

[1] 2 Tim. iii. 14.

clude, therefore, that the "immediate rule of faith" is the infallible authority which governs the Church, an authority inseparable from the Roman Church and the Holy Apostolic See. Holy Scripture and tradition contain the revealed truths, but it is the ecclesiastical authority which guards them, communicates them to us and fixes their sense. Outside of this there can be only disorder and confusion.

These considerations, united to those of the three preceding chapters, furnish us the elements of an exact analysis of our faith. Our submission should be reasonable, says the Apostle, and the authority which demands our faith should be based upon the most unquestionable titles. Far from discarding reason, we challenge it to examine our proofs. Hitherto we have seen in the Holy Scriptures only a historical document of the highest value: united to all the other proofs it shows us a religion resting upon divine intervention: in this religion, it causes us to recognize an authority divinely instituted and guaranteed infallible: our reason is satisfied, it yields to this authority: henceforth this is the part of faith.

Thus we conceive the society of the faithful united in the profession of the same faith and in the participation of the same sacraments, under the authority and guidance of the legitimate pastors whose visible head is the Pope, Bishop of Rome, successor of St. Peter and vicar of Jesus Christ upon earth. This is the definition of the Church.

CHAPTER VI.

EXTENSION OF THE CHURCH.

HITHERTO we have studied the primitive form that the Saviour gave His Church, and in order that our demonstration might be complete, we have encroached a little upon the succeeding centuries: now we resume the historical order, and we begin the examination of the facts which distinguished the life of the Church and especially characterized the conduct of the ecclesiastical authority. It is by history that our belief is assailed with the most bitterness; it is by the conscientious study of the Christian ages, that we must defend it: facts are distorted so as to render the spiritual authority odious; we must establish them in their true light in order to derive therefrom new proofs in favor of its heavenly origin. We cannot enter into all the historical details that this subject admits, but in dwelling upon the general ideas that predominate in them, we shall say enough to attain our object, which is to strengthen honest and sincere minds in the Catholic faith.

The first fact presented for our study is the immense success of the first preachers of the Gospel, and by this means the miraculous extension which the Church obtained from its first appearance. The

fact is notorious and the recital of the apostolic labors is found everywhere. It is moreover attested by the enemies as well as by the friends of Christianity. The Apostles had not yet finished their course when St. Paul wrote to the Romans, "that their faith was spoken of throughout the whole universe." One hundred years after Jesus Christ, St. Justin counted among the faithful many savage nations. "We are only of yesterday," says Tertullian in his *Apology*, "and we fill your cities, your islands, your camps, the palace, the senate and the forum; we have left you only your temples. . . . . Among the Parthians, the Medes, the Elamites, the inhabitants of Mesopotamia, of Armenia, Phrygia, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia Minor, Egypt, Cyrene, among the different races of the Getuli and the Moors, the nations of Spain, Gaul, Britain, Germany, everywhere we find the faithful." Pliny, the younger, appointed proconsul of Asia by Trajan, was alarmed at the immense number of Christians in his province: "The contagion of the Christian superstition is not confined to the cities," he says, "it has entered the villages and rural districts. Our temples are almost entirely deserted and the ceremonies neglected." "This race of Christians is everywhere received," says Seneca, "the conquered have given laws to the conquerors." Infidels have never attempted to deny the fact; some of them, like Gibbon, have endeavored to belittle it in order to escape the consequences.

These consequences are decisive (we shall see

directly), not only in favor of the Christian revelation in general, but also in favor of the Catholic Church; for bear this in mind: it is not a vague knowledge of the Gospel which is diffused throughout the world; it is with the faith in Jesus Christ, adherence to His Church such as He founded it, such as we have seen it consolidated under the authority of St. Peter and his successors. "While extending throughout the whole world," says St. Irenæus, "the Church is united as one single family, having only one faith, one heart, and one mouth; a family unanimous in teaching and in *tradition*" (Book I). The propagation of the Christian religion and the extension of this Church are therefore one and the same thing, and all that we have hitherto said receives a new confirmation from the fact which we have been discussing. Is this fact *miraculous?* Let us see.

We have already established the fact of the rapidity of the change effected in the world by the preaching of the Apostles. Now, this change was so absolute, the transformation of society so complete and human means were so disproportioned to such a work, that we can only attribute it to divine action. To convince ourselves of this it will be sufficient to call to mind:

I. *The state of pagan society* at this epoch. It seems that God had permitted it to sink to the lowest depths of degradation in order to render its regeneration more manifest. "A little later," says Chateaubriand,[1] "it was wrecked." In fact, of the

[1] *Etudes Historiques*, Préface.

most essential dogmas there remained but faint notions, feeble glimmers of a superior reason or the remnants of primitive traditions, but these ideas in the state of philosophic speculation had scarcely any connection with the beliefs and practices of society. According to Plato, "it is difficult to raise ourselves to the knowledge of the true God, and it is dangerous to publish this discovery": such was also the opinion of Socrates; and both recommend their disciples to adhere to the established religion. It is thus *that they held truth captive*, says St. Paul. In regard to the ideas adopted by Seneca and other philosophers of his time, M. Troplong[1] clearly shows that they were derived from Christianity.

With them all religious notions were strangely disfigured. Thousands of gods, some more infamous than others, received incense from the most enlightened nations; after having deified the vilest passions in an incestuous Jupiter, an immodest Venus, a thieving Mercury, a lewd Apollo; as Virgil says: *Sua cuique Deus fit dira cupido;* each man's fierce passion becomes his god; after having adored even beasts and reptiles, they proceeded to render divine honors to the monsters of cruelty who governed the Roman empire. In a word, says Bossuet, "everything was god, except God Himself."

The moral degradation was not less frightful; the most shameful infamies formed part of the worship of certain divinities. Such debauchery was necessarily allied to egotism and cruelty; and when these

[1] *De l'influence du Christianisme sur le droit Romain.*

habits invaded all classes of society, they corrupted the entire social order. Thence sprang divorce, infanticide, slavery, the combats of gladiators, etc., etc. Moreover, infidels have depicted as well as ourselves this universal decadence of pagan society. "Their intellects had failed," says Edgar Quinet, "they bordered on despair; they must either die or be renewed in the bosom of the Eternal."[1] "God hath concluded all in unbelief," saith the great Apostle, "that He may have mercy upon all. O the depth of the the riches, of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God!"[2]

II. *The perfection of the Gospel doctrine.* The mere fact of the sudden appearance of a doctrine entirely heavenly, in the midst of the torrent of all kinds of pagan iniquities, would prove, if necessary, that it was not a human conception; but we are studying it here in its action upon a depraved society, and in this point of view we should consider particularly the requirements of this doctrine. To break all idols in the name of one only and eternal God, to subject the understanding to the most astonishing mysteries of the Most Holy Trinity, the Incarnation of the Son of God, the Redemption by the cross, Sanctification by means of the sacraments; to impose upon the most depraved men those severe rules of chastity and self-denial, those difficult practices of penance and charity, without any temporal recompense, with the prospect of frightful torments, to require, in fine, all that without compromise, with-

[1] *Du Génie des Religions.* [2] Rom. xi. 32, 33.

out transition, upon the faith of a marvelous fact, that of the resurrection of a crucified Jew: such was the work of the Gospel, the work of a Church which asserted that she alone was in possession of the truth.

III. By *what means* was this work accomplished?

Twelve men, without learning, without consideration in the world, without any of the resources which human prudence requires, accomplished this prodigy in spite of the combined opposition of emperors and pagan philosophers, in spite of the blind prejudices of nations and the proud science of a cultivated society. How, without the descent of the Holy Spirit from above would the fishermen of Galilee have been able to conceive such a design? "There is only a single example in history," says Chateaubriand, "of a complete transformation of the religion of a civilized and powerful nation," and this prodigy was accomplished according to St. Paul by a preaching which the world treated as folly. This heavenly folly confounded all the wisdom of men. God chose the weak to subdue the mighty, that which was of no account and despicable to destroy that which appeared the best established. He designed that His work should bear the divine impress so that no man might glory in it. St. Paul develops these thoughts in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, chapters i. and ii.

The historian Gibbon, without denying the first cause of the rapid progress of the Christian Church, nevertheless seeks to explain it by *secondary causes*

which tend to divest the fact of its supernatural character; but all that he alleges, supposes already the progress which he pretends to explain or serves only to confirm the miracle. In fact "the inflexible and intolerant zeal of the Christians" shows them to us already gained to Jesus Christ and in the assured possession of the truth; moreover, humanly speaking, this exclusive zeal by causing the united forces of paganism to turn against them, would hasten their annihilation. "The doctrine of a future life" was not a new doctrine, but hitherto ineffectual in repressing the bad passions. "The gift of miracles attributed to the primitive Church," if it did not constitute a real intervention of the Deity, would not have produced more effect than the impostures of paganism. Admit or reject these miracles; if you admit them (for they are really incontestable), you acknowledge that the propagation of the Gospel is miraculous; if you deny them, it remains for you, says St. Augustine, to explain the greatest of miracles, namely the conversion of the world without miracles. Gibbon also alleges "the pure and austere morality of the faithful," that is to say, the very fact of the prodigious change that he attempts to explain; and finally "the union and discipline of the Christian republic," which only proves that the wisdom of the divine Lawgiver provided the Church with a constitution adapted to its extension.

"We have observed," continues Gibbon, "that the conquests of Rome prepared and facilitated those of Christianity." "The Church had speedy

success," says M. Villemain in his *Mélanges*, "because she profited by the order and peace that prevailed in the empire." That the unity of the empire was favorable to Christianity *when it was adopted*, granted; that this empire alone was, after the designs of God, the soil prepared for the diffusion of the Christian faith, we know from the prophecy of Daniel;[1] but does it follow, as Gibbon and Villemain pretend, that this circumstance of itself facilitated the progress of Christianity? This assertion would possess some value, had the imperial power been favorable to its progress; but when this power is in the hands of a man hostile to the Church, and this man disposes in an absolute manner of all the forces of the empire, then his action against the Church is strengthened both by the *extent* of his dominion, by the *order* which assures the execution of his commands, and by the *peace* which places at his disposal all the resources of the world. Thus God permitted the Roman emperors to wage for three centuries a bloody war against His Church; He did not even commence His work by the conversion of the wise,

[1] The Roman empire is represented to us in the second chapter (of Daniel) under the symbol of *iron mixed with clay* in the mysterious statue of Nabuchodonosor's dream. This empire, the fourth in the order of time, was to destroy everything. "And the fourth kingdom shall be as iron. As iron breaketh into pieces, and subdueth all things, so that shall break and destroy all these." Dan. ii. 40. But then, continues the prophet, "the Lord shall set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed. . . . . This is the stone which was cut out of the mountain without hands and which shall crush everything to pieces: clay, iron, brass, silver and gold."

the noble and the happy of the world, their turn will come as well as that of the emperors, but the first epoch belongs to the poor.

As the miraculous fact of the extension of the Church has annoyed infidels, so has it consoled and strengthened the true faithful in all ages. From the first centuries of the Christian era, while the memory of the preaching of the Apostles was still fresh, the holy Fathers appealed to this miracle against the Jews and the Gentiles. St. John Chrysostom in particular has treated this subject with an admirable eloquence in a discourse (the fifth) *against the Gentiles* and in a homily *upon the Divinity of Jesus Christ*. At the present day the development of historical studies naturally carries the attention back to a change unique in the annals of the human race. Whatever we may do, we shall never succeed in explaining it otherwise than by the all-powerful intervention of Him who said: "When I shall have been raised from the earth, I shall draw all things to Myself."

CHAPTER VII.

THE MARTYRS.

THE violence of the persecutions and the constancy of the first Christians form part of the facts that prove the miracle of the extension of the Church; we shall, however, devote a special chapter to the glorious martyrs of the first centuries, because this fact of itself possesses a great importance, and because the enemies of our faith have labored to obscure and distort it. "The blood of the martyrs," as Tertullian well says, "was the seed of new Christians." The executioners themselves were often suddenly transformed into victims. Why? Because they perceived in the courage of the martyrs the lustre of a superhuman virtue. It is a special prodigy in the general fact of the miraculous extension of Christianity. To fully comprehend this wonder, we must consider the number and the character of the martyrs.

The number of the martyrs of whom we possess authentic acts, although very considerable, is a trifle compared to the number of those who are known to God alone. Massacred in a body or burned in the churches, they form an innumerable multitude of every age, sex, and condition. Pagan as well as Christian historians, the apologists of the Christian

religion, the tyrants themselves by their edicts and their inscriptions, all bear unanimous testimony to the extent, violence, and duration of the persecutions. Tacitus informs us that the first persecutor, Nero, killed by the most barbarous punishments, a great multitude of Christians. Domitian took up the work of Nero, and from that time the Christians were incessantly persecuted. Even under the best emperors, the hatred of magistrates, and the rising of the people often brought on partial persecutions. The general persecutions were genuine attempts at extermination. Such was especially the character of the tenth, when the emperors boasted of having destroyed Christianity.[1] Against facts so notorious, of what value are the suppositions and subtleties of certain infidels? Ruinart, in his *Actes des martyrs*, has refuted them in detail.

The Christians were put to death through hatred to their religion. Far from reproaching them with any crime, the pagans could not refrain from admiring their virtues. Good citizens, faithful soldiers, they set the example of submission to the laws of the empire. Pliny testifies to this in a letter to Trajan; all the Christian apologists lay stress upon this fact. But did the pagans seek to hinder them from practicing their religion, then the Christians replied with the Apostles: *non possumus:* We cannot yield to men that which is contrary to the order of the true God. Rome could not understand this

[1] *Nomine Christianorum deleto, superstitione Christiana ubique deleta.*

language: she had mingled the worship of idols with all her institutions; she had brought to her bosom all the gods of conquered nations, and made her policy consist in maintaining this monstrous assemblage of a thousand different religions. On this ground she would probably have accepted Christ, as Marcus Aurelius did in fact: but the truth cannot ally itself with error, a true religion is necessarily exclusive; hence the Christians were considered *atheists*, the enemies of the empire and of the whole human race. Their religious practices were calumniated, all public calamities were attributed to their refusal to honor the gods. In this manner is to be explained, notwithstanding the absence of any deserved reproach, the animosity of the people who shouted: "To the lions with the Christians," and the violence of the persecutors. Religion alone was ever the cause; and here, according to St. Cyprian and St. Augustine, is the first condition of martyrdom.

Every martyr gives his life for the true religion; but this is not sufficient to give a just idea of the special character of our first martyrs. They were, according to the entire force of the word *μαρτυρες*, *witnesses*,[1] sealing with their blood the truth of their testimony. They afforded not only a grand example of attachment to religion, but also a proof of the Divinity of Christ; following the example and the words of the Apostles, they showed themselves witnesses of the miracles of the Man-God, particularly

[1] The word martyr is derived from the Greek word *μάρτυς*, plural *μάρτυρες*, which signifies a witness.

of the miracle of his resurrection. The Apostles had not discussed after the manner of philosophers; they had taught their doctrine in the name of the risen Jesus; the disciples die, like them, not for an idea, nor precisely from attachment to a dogma, but to attest a fact which would solve every controversy upon religion. See here an essential difference between the true martyrs, and those who at certain epochs have preferred to die rather than renounce their *opinions*.

Another difference, which completes our knowledge of the sublime character of our martyrs, results from the heroic conduct which they displayed in the midst of the most horrible torments. Exposed to the rage of wild beasts, burned by a slow fire, placed upon the ice, mutilated, their flesh torn from their bones, the martyrs not only remained unshaken (a fierce obstinacy is observed among the partisans of error); but appeared mild and charitable, even full of joy in suffering for the name of Jesus; women and children equaled in this the heroism of the pastors of the Church. This is not all: if each one showed himself a hero, the sentiments which animated the whole body were still more admirable. "The Christians were sufficiently numerous," Tertullian does not hesitate to tell the emperors, "to place on foot armies as formidable as the Parthians and Macedonians"; yet they never stirred up the least sedition. . . . . They had learned to honor authority, even in unworthy hands. So much power and so much submission belong only to the true martyrs of Jesus Christ.

Moreover, it was the destiny of the Church to be exposed to the attacks of error and human passions, and to conquer unceasingly by the cross of her divine Founder. Persecutions had been predicted for her as well as triumph: "If they have persecuted Me," said Jesus, "they will also persecute you: the servant is not above his master: like Me, you will be hated and delivered up: you will be My witnesses unto the extremities of the earth."[1] According to the Apostle, "to suffer persecution is the lot reserved for all those who attach themselves to Jesus Christ"; but the persecutor has power only over the body, he can effect nothing upon the soul: the latter is purified in the crucible of tribulations, and detaches itself from false gods, and gains the crown of martyrdom. It is not, therefore, death or torments that the disciples of the cross have to fear, but the weakening of the elevated sentiments which constitute the Christian spirit.

[1] St. John xv.; St. Luke xxi.; St. Matt. xxiv.; Acts of the Apostles i., etc.

CHAPTER VIII.

INTERIOR OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

During this era of martyrs, what kind of lives did the Christians lead? In order to maintain themselves against the violence of persecutions, what should not be the vivacity of their faith, the firmness of their hope, the ardor of their charity? Thus, according to the Acts of the Apostles, the first Christians had only one heart and one soul, and their perfect union was for the pagans a subject of admiration and envy. The innocence of their manners was no less remarkable; it is true some calumnies were circulated among the people, to which occasion was given by the secrecy that the Christians were obliged to observe before their persecutors in regard to their assemblies and the holy mysteries: but the serious reports of the magistrates on this point were in harmony with the apologies of the defenders of the Church. However, let us not deceive ourselves on this point, and let us beware of the exaggerations into which the Jansenists have fallen. In the midst of so many pure souls, there were traitors, even in the lifetime of the Apostles;[1] by the side of the heroes who shed their blood for the cause of Jesus Christ, there were found cowards who recoiled

[1] Epistles to the Corinthians, etc.

before torments. These exceptions do not impair the *general character* of the first epoch of the Church; they are rather the shadows that display in a clearer manner the admirable figures that fill the picture.

In order to comprehend more clearly these Christian virtues, let us see where they are formed, let us penetrate the sanctuary. We have not, it is true, upon the practices of the primitive Church, so many documents as upon those of the succeeding centuries: the persecutions explain this difference; yet upon all essential points, we recognize in the Church of that time a faithful image of the Church in all ages. This is enough to confound those who pretend to justify their errors by the example of the first Christians. In order to refute them it is sufficient to interpret the practices of the first three centuries by the practices of succeeding centuries: the latter only continued what they had received. But we will go back to the first age and consult contemporaries themselves upon the most important points of worship.

From the beginning we find in the Church the sensible signs to which Jesus Christ has deigned to attach the sanctification of man. The spiritual regeneration is wrought by Baptism, the fullness of the Holy Ghost is conferred by Confirmation. Such is the teaching of Tertullian, St. Cyprian, Clement of Alexandria, all the instructions of the catechumens, the whole ceremonial of Christian initiation. Upon this point the sacred texts were too clear, and the practice of the Apostles too evident, for any

doubt to arise regarding the essence or the efficacy of the Sacraments. The absolute necessity of baptism was equally acknowledged, and although at a later period the abuse of deferring baptism crept in, a Council of Carthage held in the year 252 declares the baptism of infants to be of obligation. "The child must be baptized before he is eight days old." One point alone gave rise to a serious discussion: St. Cyprian was of opinion that baptism conferred by heretics was of no value, but the Pope, and with him the whole Church, rejected this opinion.

The severity of the primitive discipline in regard to those who had failed in the promises of their baptism is a well-known fact. All that is important to establish is the fact that the essential condition of reconciliation was the "acknowledgment of mortal sins before the priest," that is, confession as it is now practiced in the Catholic Church. The power conferred upon the Apostles of binding and loosing, of remitting and retaining sins is a principle whose practical consequences were easy to deduce and were at all times familiar to the faithful. The power of remitting or retaining supposes the knowledge of the faults, and this knowledge supposes the declaration of the sins. "Confession was instituted by the Lord," says Tertullian (De Pœnit. II.), "and it is necessary to confess all the sins committed either by the body or the mind; either by act, or by the will." It includes, therefore, not only public sins for which they were subjected to special rules of public penance, but also secret sins, the interior acts of the will.

It is not a confession made to God alone: for the principal obstacle, according to Tertullian, that confession encounters, is *shame*. "There are some who shrink from the *manifestation of their conscience*," says he, "more sensible of shame than careful of the salvation of their soul, like those who will not make known their bodily ailment to their physician." Who is the spiritual physician to whom the penitent is to make known the wounds of his soul? All the Fathers reply: it is the priest. "It is at the feet of the priest that we must kneel," according to Tertullian; "it is from his hand, that we must receive the pardon that disposes us for the reception of the body and blood of Jesus Christ," according to St. Cyprian; "it is by the absolution of the priest," according to the same Father, "that we must prepare ourselves, while we have time, to appear before God." "The true penitent," says Origen, "is not ashamed to confess his sin to the priest in order to be delivered from it. Choose with prudence, a discreet and charitable confessor, who will examine if it is proper for the common edification that your fault be made public." Here we have auricular confession of indispensable obligation because it is of divine institution, and public confession of simple expediency as a particular discipline of the epoch.

After these testimonies of the first centuries, it would be superfluous to cite subsequent documents. All the Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries, ancient rituals, even those of sects separated from the Catholic Church for twelve centuries: every-

thing attests the uniform belief and constant practice of the Church upon this point.

The Eucharist is the center of Catholic worship. The proofs of the faith of the Church in the Eucharist as the *true body and true blood of Jesus Christ* and a *real sacrifice*, abound from the beginning.

St. Ignatius warns the faithful of Smyrna against those "who abstain from the Eucharist, because they refuse to recognize in it the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, His true body immolated for our sins and raised up by the divine power." He gives similar instructions to the faithful of Ephesus and Philadelphia. "The body is nourished with the body and blood of Jesus Christ," says Tertullian (De Resurr.), "in order that the soul may receive its increase from God Himself." St. Justin and St. Irenæus in explaining this mystery, declare that the change of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ (this is transsubstantiation), is effected by the words of the divine institution and in virtue of the command which the Saviour left to His Apostles: *Do this in memory of Me.*

Concerning the Holy Sacrifice there is the same unanimity, and the same care to support themselves by the divine institution. At the last supper, Jesus offers His body and blood (in the present tense); and the Epistle to the Hebrews speaks clearly of the victim who is the food of the Christian, and of the altar of Sacrifice, in opposition to the altars of the Old Law,[1] and of paganism;[2] behold the practice of

[1] Heb. xiii. 10. [2] 1 Cor. x. 20, 21.

the Apostles. Here are some testimonies from the Fathers of the primitive Church. "Jesus Christ," according to St. Irenæus (contra Hæreses), "instituted the new Sacrifice of the New Testament, a sacrifice which the Church received through the Apostles and which she offers to God throughout the whole world." "The priest holds the place of Christ," according to St. Cyprian (Letter lxiii.), "he does what Christ did and offers to God the Father a true and complete Sacrifice." St. Irenæus explains this subject, and points out clearly the three parts of the Sacrifice: the Offertory, the Consecration, and the Communion.

The Eucharist was the strength of martyrs, and the history of those heroic times affords us most touching accounts of the celebration of the holy mysteries in the catacombs, and even in the prisons. In order to preserve them from the profanation of the pagans, the Church did not give a complete knowledge of them, even to the catechumens. This explains certain disguised expressions in the accounts of this epoch. If notwithstanding this discipline of *secrecy* we have been able to collect testimony so explicit in favor of the divine Eucharist, what shall we obtain if we consult the following ages? The *Instructions* of St. Cyril of Jerusalem upon this point are perfectly similar to the Catholic catechisms of our time: the beautiful treatise of St. John Chrysostom upon the priesthood, like modern works, explains by the august Sacrifice, the eminent dignity of the priest. There was also at that time a special

liturgy for the dead; St. Augustine offered the Holy Sacrifice for the repose of his mother's soul; and it is not in vain, says St. John Chrysostom, that the sacred minister utters this word: "Let us pray for those who are dead in Jesus Christ." What can be more touching and more conformable to the goodness, as well as to the justice of God?

With the sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist is connected the idea of the priestly dignity and the *law of celibacy*. Consecrated to the service of the altars, clothed with an august power, the priest should live only for God and his neighbor: he should realize what our Lord proposed to chosen souls,[1] and what St. Paul said of the advantages of virginity.[2] Thus the law of ecclesiastical celibacy dates from the first age of the Church. It is mentioned in the first century, when it is spoken of as an established custom, and since the third century the Councils have insisted upon this important point of discipline, and even pronounce deposition against priests who violate the law of celibacy. Since that period this law is found in all the canons of discipline, and in the writings of the Holy Fathers. St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, and many others have proved its holiness and its necessity; they thus in advance refuted the calumnies of modern innovators.

The Church does not deny the holiness of marriage; she knows that Jesus Christ raised it to the dignity of a sacrament, and that St. Paul recognizes here an image of the union of the Saviour with His

[1] Matt. xix. 10, 11, 12. [2] 1 Cor. vii.

Church; but she knows also the privileges of virginity, and she imposes its duties upon her principal ministers. "The priest who belongs to his wife and children," says Joseph de Maistre, "no longer belongs to his flock, or only belongs to it in a partial manner." "It is the glory of the Church," says Mgr. Dupanloup, "that she has placed between herself and the world, chastity, as an impassable barrier to feeble hearts and doubtful vocations."

The veneration of the saints was manifested when the first martyrs received their crown, and what is a remarkable fact, it is explained by contemporaries themselves in the Catholic sense. The Church of Smyrna paying honors to St. Polycarp, refutes in advance pagan and heretical calumnies: "We recognize Christ as the Son of God, the martyrs we cherish as the worthy disciples of the Lord; we admire their divine charity and we desire to imitate their heroic devotion."[1] This distinction regards the sole mediation of the Saviour and justifies the honors rendered not only to the memory of the Saints, but even to their relics and images. The Acts of the Martyrs on every page attest the confidence of the faithful in the intercession of the friends of God, and St. Cyprian expressly declares that the merits of the martyrs and the works of the just will be profitable to us before the sovereign judge. Far from injuring thereby the worship of adoration which belongs only to God, the Church confirmed and

[1] *Epistola Ecclesiæ Smyrnæ ad totam Ecclesiam Catholicam*, preserved by Eusebius iv. 15.

developed it, glorifying in the Saints what God conferred upon them. The veneration of the Saints, according to the beautiful expressions of St. Athanasius, is a consequence of the incarnation of the Son of God. The human nature, which He took, was elevated and glorified in Him: it participates in His glory in proportion to the union which it preserves with Him. "The veneration of Mary as the Catholic Church understands it," says an illustrious writer (Dr. Newman), "is conformable to the true faith, unless the blasphemers of her Son are in possession of it."

Thus the veneration of the Saints was always understood and practiced. "We do not honor our holy Martyrs, as gods," says St. Augustine (Serm. ix.); "we consecrate to them neither temples nor altars, we do not offer them sacrifices. Far from us be such a sentiment! It is God alone whom we have in view: it is to Him alone that we offer sacrifice. From whom have you ever heard: I offer sacrifice to you, Peter, to you, Paul: never, never." "I honor and kiss the images of the Saints with respect," said St. Basil to Julian the apostate; they have been transmitted by the Apostles, and nothing forbids their use, which has spread to all our churches.

CHAPTER IX.

HERESIES.

HERESY is a voluntary and obstinate error against some dogma of faith.

"For there must be also heresies," says St. Paul; "that they also who are approved, may be made manifest among you."[1]

There were, in fact, heresies in the time of the preaching of the Apostles: some were formed of a mixture of Judaism and Christianity, others mingled pagan vagaries with Christian notions concerning God, the creation, Christ, etc. The Church was warned; relying on the promises of Jesus Christ, she resolutely entered this struggle which was to be perpetual. Instead of injuring her, heresies excite the vigilance of pastors, draw closer the bonds of unity and provoke doctrinal decisions which fix the precise sense of the Christian dogma.

The principle of every heresy is rebellion against the authority of the Church, and this rebellion is an inspiration of pride. In place of the authority established by God, the heretic substitutes his personal judgment: thenceforward revealed dogma is nothing more than a human opinion, subject to all the aberrations of the mind of man. By its nature,

[1] 1 Cor. xi. 19.

heresy tends necessarily to transform divine beliefs into philosophical discussions, to replace by pure reason the authority established by God. The Church cannot accept this position; she has never accepted it. She consents to explain, and does explain what she believes; she sometimes even condescends to refute human reasonings opposed to her, but she places the authority confided to her above everything, and terminates all discussion by sovereign decisions.

Thus Jesus Christ had taught; thus the Apostles acted. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty to God unto the pulling down of fortifications, destroying counsels, and every height that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every understanding unto the obedience of Christ."[1] "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding the profane novelties of words, and oppositions of knowledge falsely, so called, which some promising, have erred concerning the faith."[2] "Know also this, that in the last days shall come on dangerous times. Men shall be lovers of themselves, covetous, haughty, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, wicked, without affection, without peace, slanderers, incontinent, unmerciful, without kindness, traitors, stubborn, puffed up, and lovers of pleasures more than of God: having an appearance indeed of godliness, but denying the power thereof. Now

[1] 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. [2] 1 Tim. vi. 20, 21.

these avoid."[1] "But continue thou in those things which thou hast learned, and which have been committed to thee: knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*"[2] St. Peter speaks with no less severity against those who, disdaining authority bring in sects of perdition, and who by words of pride and promises of liberty allure their adherents into the most shameful disorders.[3] St. John treats in the same manner those who disturb the faith in the divinity of Jesus Christ. Instead of discussing with them, he sets forth as he received it from on high, the true doctrine in his first Epistle and in his admirable Gospel.

The immediate consequence of every heresy is to break the unity of the Church, and this consequence is its condemnation. The Church of Jesus Christ is essentially *one*, and the character of its unity consists principally in the profession of one and the same faith under the authority of the vicar of Jesus Christ. According to the divine word there can be only *one fold and one shepherd*.[4] "One Lord, one faith, one baptism," says St. Paul.[5] How can we suppose, continues he, that Christ can be divided, or that disjointed members may form the body of which He is the head?[6] Thus after the Apostles speak all the first Fathers of the Church. It is in the name of unity that St. Ignatius, Tertullian, St. Hilary, St. Athanasius, etc., confound all heresies. They are

[1] 2 Tim. iii. 1–5. [2] 2 Tim. iii. 14. [3] See 2 Peter ii.
[4] John x. 16. [5] Eph. iv. 5. [6] See 1 Cor. xii.

right, even in a purely philosophical point of view. In fact there is society only between intelligences, and intelligences are intimately united only in the truth, "now, the essential character of truth is precisely what makes of it the social bond, namely unity. . . . There is not, there cannot be two spiritual societies, such a society is in its nature one and universal." Thus M. Guizot expresses himself (*Civilisation en France*), when he consults only the natural justice of his mind; what he adds in favor of free examination is only an inconsistency caused by his Protestantism.

Separated from the Church, in rebellion against the only authority capable of maintaining unity, heresy is condemned every day to new divisions and to the continual multiplication of its errors. It is a part of its nature to vary and transform itself, and no human intelligence can check this movement. The distinguished minds which it has succeeded in seducing, instead of strengthening it have only hastened its decomposition, and the epochs of the greatest heretical *variations* are also those in which the promoters of heresy shone by their knowledge or their subtlety. We have the proofs before us, and it has been the same from the beginning. Simon the magician was the patriarch of the Menandrians, the Basilians, the Valentinians, and the whole family of Gnostics. Tatian was the patriarch of the Encratides and of a number of others. The Montanists became divided under different names. This is the uniform history of all heresies. They agree

only upon one point: hatred of the Church. This must be: it is the hatred of manifold error against the truth: this hatred shows in a clearer light the majestic unity of the true Church of Jesus Christ.

The spirit of independence and division that dominates heresy, necessarily assigns it a contracted existence, in opposition to the character of universality or *Catholicity* that belongs to the Church of Jesus Christ. Not only is it not spread everywhere like the Catholic Church, but by its divisions and variations, by the natural independence of its chiefs, it does not even exist in reality everywhere that it counts adherents. All these separated trunks do not form a whole; that is the exclusive privilege of the Church *Catholic*, that is to say, to be one in *universality*. She alone, according to the promise of Jesus Christ, unites all the children of God from the extremities of the earth, and enforces her unity as she extends her conquests.

Limited in its existence, hostile to legitimate authority, given up to the spirit of innovation, heresy preserves no title to the apostolic succession. By denying the constant traditions of the Church, it breaks the bonds which perpetuate from age to age the mission and teaching of the first messengers of Jesus Christ; it condemns the doctrine which alone can connect it with apostolic succession; it assumes a new mission which is derived from no authority; in a word, "it pronounces," says St. Paul, "its own condemnation." It is in vain that it invokes the Holy Scriptures as a last resource: without authority

to admit them as the word of God, without a mission to give them a certain interpretation, without a defence against the grossest aberrations, heretics are borne along, according to the predictions of St. Peter and St. Jude, by currents of contrary doctrines like varying clouds whose irregular course follows no other rule than the caprice of the winds. It is otherwise with the bark which Peter ceases not to direct through his successors, which has its course all traced in the apostolic traditions, and the infallible assurance of arriving in spite of tempests at the harbor of salvation.

"The tree is known by its fruits." By this rule heresy furnishes a last evidence against itself. From the Ebionites who were combated by the Apostles, down to the Mormons who style themselves latter-day saints, what have been the fruits of heresy? What morality has it inspired? What works has it produced? What, for example, has it done with the laws of continence and charity? Without doubt, there will always be scandals even among the children of God; Jesus Christ has warned us of this; in the field of the head of the family there will always be tares mingled with the good grain; but the Church will acknowledge as her own only what she cultivates; she never cultivates anything but what is chaste, charitable, humble, submissive, like her divine model; in a word, by her doctrines, by her works, by the virtues of a great number of her children, she will and must always be holy. Such is the character which Jesus Christ has imprinted upon

her and which the Apostles did not cease to recall to the faithful. Where shall we find this character of holiness outside of the Catholic Church? Most of the sects sprung from the corruption of manners and were propagated by the allurements of vice. Even those that began by displaying an excessive severity have ended in corruption.

What we have just shown, joined to the principles set forth in chapter fourth, permits us to conclude that heresy is one of the gravest and most pernicious of crimes. This crime destroys faith, without which, according to the Apostle, it is impossible to please God; it attacks even the foundation of the work of Jesus Christ. Be not astonished, therefore, at the severity displayed against heresy not only by the successors of the Apostles, but even by the Apostles themselves. According to St. Paul, we should avoid heretics;[1] according to St. John we should hold no intercourse with them.[2]

If heresy is a crime, whoever perseveres in it voluntarily excludes himself from the friendship of God and from eternal happiness. Such is the meaning of these words; *out of the Catholic Church there is no salvation.* "Be assured," says St. Fulgentius (*De Fide*, 39), "that every heretic or schismatic, whoever he may be, baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, however great may be his alms, even though he shed his blood for the name of Jesus Christ, can in no way be saved, unless he returns to the Catholic Church."

"If a man that remained outside of Noe's ark

[1] Titus iii. 10. [2] 2 John x.

could have escaped the deluge," says St. Cyprian (*De Unit.* 5), "he who remains outside of the gates of the Church may be saved." There is only one opinion upon this point in the Epistles of the Apostles and in the writings of the holy Fathers.

This sentence concerns all those who adhere to what they know to be error, or who will not take the trouble to clear up well-founded doubts concerning their belief. In fact, they disregard the law established not by the Church, but by the founder of the Church. But among those who have been brought up in heresy, there are simple men, who receive in good faith error for the truth, in whom error is not voluntary, nor consequently culpable. Materially they are heretics, formally they are not. If they have been regenerated by baptism, and keep the commandments of God, they belong to the *soul of the Church* and are not excluded from the inheritance of Jesus Christ; but if they have not participated in any manner, even by desire, in the grace of Baptism, they can have no part in the fruits of the Redemption; they are in the condition of pagans. Have they been guilty of personal sins? They will be punished for them. Have they made a good use of the means within their reach? Providence will not fail them. Finally do they die without Baptism like children before the use of reason? It is permitted us to believe that the privation of the vision of God will not be for them a punishment properly speaking; their lot according to St. Augustine, being such that it is better for them to be thus than never to have received existence.

CHAPTER X.

COUNCILS.

According to divine institution, the highest authority in the Church is an Œcumenical Council, presided over by the Bishop of Rome, the successor of St. Peter.

That a Council may be General, it is not necessary (for that is not possible) that all the Bishops of Christendom even to the last shall assemble in council, but it is necessary that all shall be summoned and the assembled bishops represent sufficiently the universal Church. Some have asked whether the Council is above the Pope or the Pope above the Council. That is an idle, not to say an absurd question; since every legitimate Council supposes the presidency or at least the approbation of the Pope; no Council possesses any authority except on the condition of uniting with the first pastor of the Church. Gerson proves this, although he is by no means favorable to the pontifical authority.[1]

Beside General Councils, there are national and provincial Councils: the latter are more especially concerned in the maintenance of ecclesiastical discipline and in causing the sovereign decisions of the Church to be respected. It is by these assemblies

[1] *De potestate Ecclesiæ*, Consid. 8.

especially that the Church has exercised the happy influence of which we shall hereafter speak. There is no writer of any weight at the present day who does not render them this homage.

The Council was a high court of justice, when disorder was prevalent everywhere; it was a grand deliberative assembly; it was the reunion of the most noble intellects whence light was diffused throughout the world. Whoever wishes to be fully acquainted with the state of society in the middle ages should study the Councils. "The Councils were the religious and political assemblies of all the middle ages."[1]

What we have to say here, concerns especially the general Councils.

To convoke Councils, to define dogmas, to excommunicate heretics, to enact laws on ecclesiastical matters, is a right that belongs by divine appointment to the Church and to the Church alone. She may submit to the necessities of the times, but she cannot renounce this right; she may accept the assistance of temporal princes to facilitate her work, but she cannot surrender in their favor the authority which she has received. It is by these principles that the facts must be judged. On the termination of the persecutions the Church was unable to provide the means for the convocation of a Council, she could not adopt all the measures necessary to make her decisions respected; in this the emperors lent their assistance and in this sense Constantine styles

[1] Villemain, *Littér.* 11e leçon.

himself the *exterior bishop* of the Council. The emperors sometimes abused their position to meddle with what was beyond their province; but these abuses were never able to constitute a prescription against the ecclesiastical government of the Church.

In regard to the General Councils which, as such, interest the whole Church, the right of convocation, of presidency, of confirmation, belongs necessarily to him whose authority extends over the whole Church. This rule was recognized from the first centuries, in the East as well as in the West. At the Council of Nice, the first Œcumenical Council, the Pope did not preside in person, but, what is still more remarkable, by his legates. The first signature before those of the patriarchs of Antioch and Alexandria, is that of a bishop who has not of himself any title to this pre-eminence, but who holds his prerogative only from him who sent him; it is that of Osius, bishop of Cordova. Two priests, Vito and Vincent, sign as legates of Pope Sylvester I. At the Council of Chalcedon the legate of St. Leo opposes the admission of Dioscorus, "because," said he, "he dared to assemble a Council without the authorization of the Apostolic See, a thing that has never been permitted or done before."

The Church knows that she possesses the truth and that error can never prevail in her bosom. Thus she fears not to place her decisions, since the Council held at Jerusalem by the Apostles themselves, under the sanction of the Holy Ghost by this formula: It hath pleased the Holy Ghost and ourselves.

It is a consequence and a confirmation of all that we have said of her infallible authority in all that regards revelation. It does not follow that this authority pronounces or can pronounce without examination: what is promised to it is not inspiration, but the *assistance of the Divine Spirit*. She consults, therefore, the double trust committed to her, she examines the constant tradition of Christianity, she at length pronounces that a certain doctrine is or is not conformable to it; and this judgment is not only final and unchangeable, but also infallible, in virtue of the divine promises. As long as the examination of the doctrine continues in Council, the Church hears, discusses, deliberates and prays; but when she has once decided, she admits only an humble submission to her decrees; whatever may be the number of the refractory, whatever may be the consequence of their obstinacy, she never hesitates to proclaim the truth which she owes to the world, in the name of Jesus Christ. Such was the conduct of the Church at Nice against Arius, at Constantinople against Macedonius, at Ephesus against Nestorius and Pelagius, at Chalcedon against Eutyches, and subsequently at Trent against the Protestants.

The principal object of the first Œcumenical Councils was the dogma upon which rests the whole structure of religion. Against numerous and bold innovators the Church was obliged to concentrate her forces and establish by clear and precise definitions the sense of revealed doctrine.

Arius had denied the Divinity of the Word and

the identity of substance between the Father and the Son; he had thus renewed the heresies already confounded by the Apostles themselves: the Council of Nice which assembled in 325 opposed to him by the mouth of St. Athanasius the written and traditional belief of all the Churches, anathematized the heretical doctrine and declared the Son equal to His Father in everything, eternal like Him, in a word consubstantial with His Father, having only one and the same substance with Him. Hitherto the Church had not been disturbed by certain expressions which did not set forth this truth in a complete manner, expressions that escaped even the holy Fathers who "spoke with the security of a faith that no one attacked, *vobis nondum litigantibus*," says St. Augustine to the heretics, "*securius loquebantur*"; but from this time this Nicene creed served as a rule, and, notwithstanding the intrigues of the sectaries and the connivance of some emperors, the term *consubstantial* was rigorously maintained against the semi-Arian expression of *resemblance* which instead of identity only admitted the resemblance of nature between the Father and the Son.

The other Councils were conducted after the model of that of Nice. Macedonius attempted against the Holy Ghost what Arius had done against the Son. In condemning him, the first Council of Constantinople (A.D. 381) defines in the most precise terms all that relates to the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. Afterward discussions arose upon the incarnation of the Son of God. Nestorius admitted

two *persons* in Jesus Christ and, consequently, denied the Divinity of Christ. Eutyches by a contrary error, admitted in him only *one nature* and consequently only one will: the Church condemned these opinions at Ephesus (A.D. 431), and at Chalcedon (A.D. 451), and summed up the Catholic doctrine in the dogma of the hypostatic union of the divine and human nature in one single divine person. Thus were settled the questions of the principal dogmas in the first four Œcumenical Councils whose decisions, according to St. Gregory the Great, are as sacred as the four Gospels. The Catholic doctrine upon these points is set forth in the *creed of St. Athanasius.*

Whilst in the East the heretics discussed the mysteries of the Most Holy Trinity, and of the incarnation of the Word, in the West heretical pride grappled with the still more delicate questions of redemption and grace. What can man do of himself to gain eternal salvation? At what point does he require the supernatural aid of grace? In what proportions do free will and the operation of grace concur in his works? These questions together with the cognate ones of sin, justification and predestination, were raised by Pelagius and victoriously answered by St. Augustine. While respecting free will, the great doctor developed the doctrine of St. Paul upon the necessity of grace and prepared the decisions of the Church at Carthage, Rome and Ephesus. Pelagius had exaggerated the natural powers of man, others long afterward will deny them

and reduce man to a mere machine set in motion by an irresistible impulse; Pelagius and Calvin hold to the two extremes between which the Catholic truth is found, conformable both to sound reason and to apostolic tradition.

Thus maintained by the authority of the Councils and the Popes, the Catholic doctrine always the same in substance is nevertheless developed and arranged even to the last consequences contained in its principles. "This development is a progress," says St. Vincent of Lerins, "but a progress without a change: a progress similar to that of the human body, which being always the same develops with age without increasing or diminishing the number of its members."[1]

This progress has nothing in common with the heretical transformation which is a corruption of the primitive type, an innovation constantly rejected by the Church in the name of her principle: *Nihil innovetur, nisi quod traditum est. . . . . Quod ubique, quod semper.*[2] Doctor Newman has set forth these ideas in a most remarkable manner in his *History of the Development*, etc.

We cannot better conclude these observations than by the words of our holy Father Pius IX., in his Encyclical upon the Immaculate Conception of Mary: "The Christian Church which guards and defends the dogmas committed to her care, never

[1] *Commonitorium*, 39.

[2] Let no doctrine be introduced, unless handed down by tradition. . . . . The same everywhere and at all times.

modifies them, she neither adds nor takes away; but she devotes particular attention to what is ancient in order to treat of it with prudence and fidelity. If, therefore, some confused germ of the faith of the Fathers appears in antiquity, she aids its progress and improvement in such a manner that these ancient dogmas of holy doctrine become evident, luminous, precise, but continue to be themselves entire and complete; because they are developed solely in their manner, that is, in the same dogma, the same sense, the same notion."

CHAPTER XI.

THE HOLY FATHERS.

Among the Catholic writers who, during the first ages of the Church, defended the truth, we distinguish certain eminent men called Fathers, or Doctors of the Church. Their writings form a vast repertory of ecclesiastical knowledge, in which we find the belief and practice of the early Christians recorded by witnesses. The interpretation of the sacred text, the development of dogma, the explanation of the sacraments, controversies against all kinds of adversaries, discourses on Christian morality and energetic exhortations to the practice of virtue: everything is there; it is the daily teaching of the Church adapted to the wants of the time, it is the most ample form of apostolic tradition. Accordingly, the doctrine of the holy Fathers has ever been in the Catholic Church the object of special study in order to solve difficult questions; and their unanimous agreement has been at all times regarded as a decisive rule.

The Providence which watches over the Church raised up men of extraordinary genius to defend her in difficult epochs. They were not wanting during the centuries of persecution. St. Ignatius, St. Polycarp, St. Clement, belonging to the era of the Apostles; St. Justin, Tertullian, Origen, St. Cyprian, St.

Irenæus, and many others had valiantly combated against enemies from without and within; but it was especially after the period of the persecutions that the government of the Church, for a long time trammeled, was rendered more difficult by new accretions, when by the favor of peace and the imperial protection, there appeared a great number of feeble, cowardly or ambitious souls; when the spirit of revolt displayed itself by so many and such formidable heresies; it was at this critical period that the greatest Christian geniuses appeared. In the first rank of this illustrious phalanx stood St. Athanasius against the Arians, St. Leo against the Eutycheans and St. Augustine against the Donatists, the Manicheans and the Pelagians. Joined to this array of defenders in the East were St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Basil, St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. John Chrysostom; in the West we find St. Hilary and St. Optatus, St. Ambrose and St. Jerome. Taking up the expressions of their predecessors that were sometimes obscure, going back to the traditions of the different Churches, the Fathers of the fourth century completed the work of the great Councils and replied in advance to all modern errors.

The holy Fathers not only contended valiantly against heresy and faithfully set forth the whole Catholic doctrine, but they also penetrated further into the revealed truths, which they made a profound study: in a word they created *ecclesiastical science.* This science does not consist in discovering the truths of faith by the light of reason, but in acquir-

ing a more complete and more elevated knowledge of them by the assistance of sound philosophy. As philosophers, most of the holy Fathers belonged to the school of Plato, a fact which has given occasion to exaggerated conclusions. Some enemies of the Christian religion have gone so far as to declare that even the dogma of the Holy Trinity was borrowed from Plato: an absurd calumny, since there is no real resemblance between the Christian mystery and the explanations of Plato upon what he calls [1] νοῦς and μονογενής. That upon secondary points, some Fathers, particularly of the Alexandrian school, have pushed their philosophic predilections too far, we will not deny; but in general, they have only collected and made tributary to revelation the truths scattered through the pagan systems; for them, divine revelation towers above all the deductions of reason. This is what St. Justin, one of those accused of Platonism, declares in his dialogues with Tryphon: "I quote neither Plato nor Pythagoras," says he, "but men enlightened by the spirit of God." According to him and Clement of Alexandria, the Church borrows nothing from the Platonists, but the latter derive their new ideas from Christianity.

Defenders of orthodoxy against heresy, witnesses and preservers of the Catholic belief, founders of ecclesiastical science, the holy Fathers are yet the representatives of a noble Christian literature. Before entering upon the study of the holy Scriptures, they had acquired from the purest sources a

[1] Νοῦς, mind, thought, etc. Μονογενής, only-begotten.

knowledge of the tongues of Rome and Athens; they had borrowed from classic antiquity the form in which they clothed the Christian idea. With them this work was neither an exaggeration of pagan formulas nor a painful labor of adaptation, but the natural result of a full Christian conviction, expressing itself fully in the style of the great models which they had appropriated to themselves. They acted in this as the Church did in regard to the pagan temples, which she purified and consecrated to the true God.

CHAPTER XII.

RELIGIOUS ORDERS.

The Christian life has different degrees; and as a principal distinction our Saviour Himself indicated the two paths which lead to eternal life: that of the *commandments* which is of common obligation and that of the *counsels*[1] which is of free choice for those who strive after perfection. The acceptance of these counsels as a perpetual obligation is the essence of the religious life; the approbation of the Church constitutes a *religious order* of those who unite for this end. In its principle the religious state is of divine institution; by its constitution and its special form it is based upon a sovereign act of the ecclesiastical authority: two considerations that secure for it the respect of every enlightened and sincere Christian.

No religious order in particular is necessary to the Church, but the practice of the evangelical counsels can never cease in her bosom; this practice forms part of the treasure of sanctity which raises her above all the sects. Accordingly, the Church has ever manifested a special solicitude in favoring and regulating the religious life, and on their side the

[1] The three Evangelical Counsels are: voluntary poverty, perpetual chastity, and entire obedience.

religious orders have employed themselves for the good of the Church with an unparalleled devotion. We may say that they have been in the hands of God instruments adapted to the needs of each period. In the presence of paganism the religious life, at one time solitary, at another time common,[1] presented to a corrupt world the spectacle of an existence entirely spiritual and a penitence which was often frightful: the Pauls, the Antonies, the Pachomiuses and their disciples by thousands peopled the desert with terrestrial angels. Against the barbarians of the north were formed those admirable institutions of the middle ages, the monasteries of St. Benedict: they were the advanced posts of Christian civilization, the schools of our ancestors, the centers of agriculture and of all the useful arts, places of refuge in case of invasion, the stations whence departed or whither returned to recruit themselves such missionaries as St. Patrick, St. Augustine, St. Columba, St. Gall, St. Severinus, St. Boniface and a host of others. The missionary first raised a cross which was often sprinkled with his blood; to this cross succeeded a chapel and a cell. The chapel was surrounded with cottages which became a hamlet, then a village, and finally a city. Such was the humble and glorious origin of our most famous cities. In the darkest periods these same monasteries were the only refuge of letters and the sciences, the only hope of their revival in the future. "We owe to the monasteries," says Villemain, "the

[1] That is, where religious live in community.

inviolability of all that remains of the moral and studious life, the revival of the fine arts, the transmission of letters and new discoveries in the sciences."

"One simple monastery of the Benedictines," says Gibbon, "has perhaps rendered greater services to the sciences, than the two universities of Oxford and Cambridge." This reminds us that a few years ago the university of Cambridge demanded the re-establishment of a sort of monachal institution. During the invasions of the Mahometans, the Order for the Redemption of Captives devoted even their liberty and their lives to the redemption of prisoners, and at the end of the crusades the orders of Knights sustained with renown the honor of the Christian arms. But the disorders which had accumulated through so many invasions and struggles had to be combated by the most energetic remedies; this will be the task of the mendicant orders, who, destitute of everything, will renew the wonders of the apostolic preaching; and if all the zeal of men is not sufficient, Christian virgins will spend their lives in hospitals and in schools, and will astonish the world by the spectacle of a charity which belongs only to the true Church of Jesus Christ. If there be anything more noble than this devotedness, it is its exercise at a time when the convents are the object of the most furious attacks.

This picture of which we have only space for the outlines, replies sufficiently to the accusations with which the religious orders have been overwhelmed. The monasteries of the middle ages have been

reproached for the extent of their possessions and for their riches; but these riches were chiefly the result of improvements of the soil which they cultivated. "The Benedictine monks cultivated and improved the soil of Europe. This they did on an extensive scale by associating agriculture with preaching. A colony of monks, few in number at first, proceeded to uncultivated spots, sometimes to a region still pagan, in Germany, for example, or in Britain; and these missionaries and cultivators at the same time, accomplished their double task with equal peril and fatigue."[1] In regard to the use which they made of their riches, they were a means of extending the benefits of Christianity and of succoring not only private persons, but even states whose resources were exhausted. If these riches sometimes introduced *abuses*, especially when the secular power imposed worldly abbots upon the monasteries, the Church never sanctioned these abuses and she often displayed great vigor in reforming them. These reforms prevailed wherever the Church could exercise her independent authority; and the religious orders continue to be the principal ornament of the spouse of Jesus Christ, resembling in their variety the precious adornment which crowns the Queen of Heaven: *Regina in vestitu deaurato, circumdata varietate.*[2]

In regard to the accusations which attack the monastic life and represent it as an *idle, unsocial and unhappy life*, if they are not a disloyal pretext to

[1] Guizot, civilisation en France. [2] Ps. xliv. 10.

deprive the Church of her most devoted defenders, they are the result of ignorance and prejudice. Idleness! there is less in the cloister than anywhere else; all the hours are divided between prayer and labor: prayer and labor equally useful to society. Suppose for example a community whose sole occupation is prayer and contemplation: souls whose only thought is to become more and more united to God, to intercede between heaven and earth, and to draw down divine blessings upon society; would not this service be as valuable as any industry whatever? Is not this culture of the soul above all improvement in human arts? To disregard it, would be to disregard the first needs and highest interests of society. Therefore be not astonished if these pretended victims of fanaticism are perfectly contented and happy with their lot; they chose this lot freely (otherwise it would be a detestable abuse condemned by the Church); to enjoy it, some have renounced the most brilliant positions in the world and thanked the Lord every day for the benefit of their vocation: because "man lives not by bread alone," says the Saviour, "but also by the word of God."

CHAPTER XIII.

SOCIAL INFLUENCE OF THE CHURCH.

THE first and essential end of the Church is to procure for man eternal happiness in the life to come; but everything that serves to attain this end at the same time conduces to the temporal happiness not only of individuals but also of the whole human race. "Wonderful fact!" says Montesquieu, "the Christian religion which seems to have for its object only the happiness of the next life, constitutes also our happiness in this." "Man, social by nature," says St. Augustine, "becomes unsocial only by his vices," and Christianity alone furnishes him power to triumph over them. Society as well as the Church is the work of God: the Church is the society of the disciples of the Man-God in human society: it is a *model society*, regulated by the principles of her divine lawgiver: applied to human society, the same principles must elevate and strengthen it.

The history of this influence should not be considered as constituting of itself a decisive proof of Christian truth, but it confirms the faith of the true children of the Church; and, in regard to the enemies of her teaching, it substitutes for their hostile prejudices, dispositions favorable to the truth.

Pagan society was either despotic or anarchical. The despotism that had taken possession of the civilized world, was not limited to the place where it was personified in a single man, absolute arbiter of the lives of his subjects; it was the foundation of their institutions, it entered into the very idea of society, which absorbed the individual as a part of the whole in the general interest. It was the reverse of this among the barbarians of the north. There individual independence was carried even to disorder; powerful to destroy but unable to build up. The Church alone possessed the principle which constitutes the basis of society: she restored to man personal dignity without delivering him up to himself; she delivers man from the yoke of man to subject him to Him from whom emanates all power upon earth; she establishes *authority*. By virtue of this principle, the power of commanding is fixed, obedience is noble; both know their limits; the prince can command, the subject can obey only in whatever is in conformity with the law of the sovereign legislator.

Certain modern theories carry society back to its pagan condition. The sovereignty of the people understood in the sense of the social contract of J. J. Rousseau makes the king a simple mandatory always liable to be recalled by the multitude. Thence by a natural consequence, the people are always in revolt or in oppression.

The application of this principle of authority encountered numerous obstacles in a society rotten

to the core and continually disturbed by foreign invasions; but the Church labored incessantly first to save the remnants and then to organize its Roman and barbarian elements. At the present day the Catholic Church alone maintains her principle against the excesses both of power and liberty. The enemies of the Church by turns accuse her of insolence and servility to power. Why? Because according to circumstances the Church recalls kings to their duty and free peoples to respect and obedience.[1] "Catholicism has the spirit of authority," says M. Guizot, "it lays down this principle with great firmness and a true understanding of human nature. It is the grandest, the most powerful school of respect that the world has ever possessed." — *Du Catholicisme, etc.*

Elsewhere the same writer is less just toward the Church; he represents to us the faithful absorbed by the association of the Church, as much as the Romans were by society; he thus disregards the principle of obedience which does not terminate in the Church, and that of the personal responsibility of man before God. Obedient to the authority which directs them toward their superior end, the faithful have also individual duties by which they are freely to merit their happiness, even were it necessary in order to fulfil them, to brave the entire world.

The social relations are governed by the laws of

[1] See Balmes: *Protestantism compared with Catholicity*, chap. lvi.

justice and *charity*. At the period of the decline of the Roman power justice was outraged and charity unknown. Slavery, infanticide, divorce, tyranny, reigned without restraint in society. As soon as the Church was free to act, she used her utmost endeavors to infuse into the laws, manners and institutions, respect for property, the inviolability of person, the stability of the conjugal bond, the protection of the weak, the right of nations even amid the horrors of war.

The number of free men in antiquity was much inferior to the number of slaves, and the latter were treated as a vile herd. When a Roman citizen was killed at home, all his slaves were put to death. On one single occasion, according to the report of Tacitus (*Ann.* 14), four hundred were executed. Woman was far from being the companion of man such as Christianity made her. At the present day "in all the countries where Christianity does not flourish, we observe a certain tendency to the degradation of woman."[1] To shameful maxims upon women and slaves, Plato and Aristotle add the recommendation that deformed children be destroyed.

After having prepared the way by the gentle influence of her principles, the Church in the year 1167 decreed *that all Christians should be exempt from servitude.* In 1839 Gregory XVI. spoke with vehemence against the slave trade. Balmes has developed this subject clearly in the fifteenth and following chapters of his work which we have already cited.

[1] *Christian Researches in Asia*, by Buchanan.

He proves against Guizot, that the Church never showed herself indifferent in regard to the slaves and that to *her alone* belongs the honor of their emancipation. It is but a short time ago that some of the Protestants of the United States accused their own Churches of favoring slavery. How many struggles have not the Popes sustained to maintain monogamy and the indissolubility of marriage? By showing themselves inflexible upon this point, in spite of the wrath of kings, not only did they fulfil a duty imposed by Jesus Christ, but they also rendered an eminent service to society.—See Balmes, chapters xxiv., xxv.

"We owe to Christianity," says Montesquieu, "a certain political right, and during war a certain law of nations which human nature alone could not recognize."

The legislation that consecrated the foregoing principles was chiefly the work of the clergy; ecclesiastical law served as a model for civil ordinances: the Councils traced the way for political assemblies.

It was comparatively a small achievement of the Church to regulate justice; she owed to the world the benefits of the charity which she had learned from her divine Founder. We know well what she has accomplished for the relief of the poor and the sick, for the education of children, for the well-being and consolation of the unfortunate of every degree; she taught the rich and the great not only to be generous toward their brethren in Jesus Christ, but also to consider themselves honored when rendering

them humble services. All these results are due not to the vague and abstract Christianity of Protestants, but to the religious body established by Jesus Christ, with its dogmas, its discipline, its hierarchy, its supreme Pontiff; in a word, to the Catholic Church.

Thanks to this salutary influence, European society has acquired an incontestable superiority over the rest of the world; the principles of the Gospel have passed not only into the laws but into the public conscience; therefore particular disorders were always less than the fundamental vice of pagan society. This superiority can only increase by the influence of the Catholic religion; while it diminishes from the day that ungrateful children repudiate the inheritance of their mother.[1]

We do not pretend that the society of the middle ages was a perfect society. Far from it. There were necessarily very grave disorders in the mingling of Roman corruption with Germanic barbarity. Without the Church society would have been destroyed. Some modern writers have attempted to rehabilitate the *barbaric element*, with an aim easy to divine: but these attempts are in contradiction with the most positive evidence of history. The Church saved and gradually reformed society; she accomplished this with that wisdom which, without subverting institutions, labors to transform them by infusing into them a superior principle of life and force. To diminish the inconveniences of feudalism

[1] See the description of European society in the twentieth chapter of Balmes.

she connected it with religion by the solemnity of oaths; and in the most warlike epochs, she established in the name of God, suspension of arms which for this reason were called the *Truce of God.* To soften manners, to check bad passions, to repress the violence of the great, to relieve the condition of the poor, to establish among all persons relations of fraternity, to lay everywhere the foundations of a wise liberty: such has been the political task of the Church which she has pursued often at great hazard and expense.

Some have reproached the Church for the ignorance of the centuries which followed the invasions of the barbarians; others have even gone further: according to some skeptics revelation is essentially hostile to the progress of science. This would be a serious objection if progress consisted in bringing all acquired knowledge into question. Such a progress is only the barren skepticism of those pretended philosophers *who are always learning but never attaining to the knowledge of the truth.*[1] The truth being known upon one point, instead of retarding the investigations of science, furnishes a starting point which is sometimes indispensable, and always useful; and certainly the Church may be proud of the great men whom she has formed. She counted many at a period when everywhere else the cultivation of letters and sciences had almost ceased; it is to her we owe the monasteries and the cathedral schools, where the sciences found their first refuge; to her we owe

[1] 2 Tim. iii.

the universities which everywhere revived the taste for study; to her in fine belongs the honor of having conceived and executed the artistic monuments which are the admiration of the world.

By the side of this general impulse given to civilization, of what weight are a few isolated facts, in which, as some pretend, the Church disregarded the interest of human sciences. Beside, they have been exaggerated for the most part, and sometimes completely distorted, as the history of Abelard, who was not condemned for his method but for his errors; also the history of Galileo, who was punished very paternally, not for his astronomical system, but for the abuse which he made of the sacred text.[1] Philosophic truth cannot be in opposition to religious truth. Both derive their origin from God, the author and Lord of all science: *Deus scientiarum Dominus.*

The influence of the Church upon the society of the middle ages was immense, and every well informed person must acknowledge the happy results; the Church, they acknowledge, was the instructor and protector of our ancestors, but there they say her part should cease. Henceforth she must yield to philosophy. We have already seen the effect of this philosophy without religion, and the social results have only shown by the contrast, the benefits of religious influence. "Faith never diminishes," says Lacordaire, "unless reason grows weaker," and,

[1] This point of history has been completely cleared up by the historical memoirs of Mgr. Marino Marini.

we may add, without disturbance of the social order. Material progress, far from compensating for the weakening of the religious principle, increases the danger still more and delivers society disarmed to all bad passions. We know and see what true civilization has here lost; if it retains at the present day any force of resistance, it owes it to the social influence of the Church in former periods: "It is to Christianity," says M. Guizot, "it is to the religious society, that we owe the spirit of morality; the sentiment and the empire of a rule, of a moral law, of the mutual duties of men."[1] This is what the Church taught the barbarians of the seventh century and what still keeps in check the yet more formidable barbarians who rise even in the bosom of modern civilization.

[1] *Civilisation en France*, 7 leçon

CHAPTER XIV.

RELATIONS OF THE TWO POWERS.

"Two powers govern the world," writes Pope Gelasius to the emperor Anastasius; "the spiritual authority of the Pontiffs and the temporal power of kings." These powers have for their end, one the interior and spiritual happiness of man, the other the exterior and temporal prosperity of society; both should tend to the eternal happiness of their subjects. This distinction of powers is an essentially Christian principle, in direct opposition to the pagan principle. *Cujus est regio illius est religio*,[1] is a formula which innovators have borrowed from paganism, a formula of servitude to a power to which the divine lawgiver committed no authority, a formula of revolt against those whom He invested with the plenitude of spiritual power. The two powers are distinct and independent each in its sphere. This results as we have seen, from the divine institution and practice of the Apostles; this is the basis of the Christian organization of society, as well as the guarantee of the civilization and of the dignity of man.

The two powers are distinct but they are not hostile. Far from it: they have reciprocal duties the

[1] The religion of a country belongs to its ruler.

performance of which affords them a mutual support. If the temporal power causes the spiritual authority to be respected, as it should be, without obstructing it, without meddling with the things of God; on its side, the spiritual authority, faithful to the spirit of Jesus Christ, renders to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and recognizes in the temporal prince a power that comes from God, and, by imposing on its subjects interior obedience, secures the stability of thrones and states. Such is the admirable harmony of powers in a society constituted on a Christian basis.

The state is one: but it is composed like the individual of two elements which are the soul and body; the Church does not form a state within the state, as some have said, in order to excite jealous susceptibilities, but a counterpoise indispensable to the sovereign authority and a guarantee of liberty, a thousand times stronger and more noble than all that human wisdom has attempted to substitute in its stead. The Church possesses a monarchical government, the one best adapted to the conduct of souls; but she accommodates herself in the temporal order to every form of government; she does not even pronounce upon the manner in which the power is acquired and established; provided that its origin is legitimate, she desires that the people have an interior respect for it, and that they submit to it as to the established order of God. "Let every soul be subject to higher powers: for there is no power but from God: and those that are are ordained

of God. Therefore he that resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation." [1]

The study of historical facts, while justifying the use which the Church has made of her authority in regard to the temporal order, will throw a new light upon the principles which we have just established.

I. It was during the era of persecution that the Church proclaimed, with her own spiritual independence, the respect due to the temporal authority, as emanating from the divine authority. "We must obey God rather than men," she said to the princes who abused their power; but she did not call their authority in question, nor authorize revolt; and we have learned from the celebrated Encyclical of Gregory XVI., that "the submission of the martyrs, in all that was not contrary to the order of God, was a necessary consequence of the holy precepts of the Christian religion." Thus always in harmony with itself, the spiritual authority maintains in the nineteenth century what it had practiced in the beginning, and condemns the insurrectionary system based upon the social contract of J. J. Rousseau.

II. Persecuted during three centuries, the Church saw the era of protection opening before her; this had its dangers as well as its advantages. A protective, easily becomes an oppressive, power; under the pretext of protection, first the Roman emperors, then the masters of the dismembered provinces of the empire attempted to seize the spiritual direction

[1] Rom. xiii. 1, 2.

of their subjects. The situation of the Church was painful. She must show her gratitude for benefits received without compromising her independence. With such princes as Constantine, Theodosius, Justinian, Charlemagne, St. Louis, these concessions did not become a precedent: what they decreed in the spiritual order, they did in the name of the spiritual authority. They themselves declared this: Constantine at the Council of Nice, Justinian in a letter to Dacian and in several of his laws, Charlemagne in several regulations known as Capitulars, have left us proofs of their reserve in all the things of God and the Church. It was not the same with all the princes of this period, and more than once the Church was obliged to reject their interference and condemn their encroachments. This led to

III. *The era of contests:* Struggles to defend morality against the scandals of courts; struggles to guard the sanctity of marriage against the caprices of princes; struggles to preserve the ecclesiastical functions from incontinence and simony: and above all, the struggle to maintain the independence of the ecclesiastical authority against the pretensions of the emperors of Germany. They attempted nothing less than to make Popes and Bishops the instruments of their despotism, as it happened in the East, and as we now see it in the Russian Church. At the moment of the greatest danger for the Church, God gave her a chief capable of breaking this chain of iniquity. This was the glory of St. Gregory VII. Resolved to reform the manners of the clergy and

to destroy simony, this great man understood that the evil lay in the subjection of the ecclesiastical authority; and, as a sign of this subjection, in the right which the emperors claimed of giving the Bishops the investiture of the crosier and ring; that is to say, of the insignia of the episcopal authority. This celebrated question of *investitures* was not a question of pure form; to concede to the emperors the canonical investiture, was to transfer to their authority the highest ecclesiastical jurisdiction; it was to enslave the Church and to violate the divine institution. Gregory VII. could not yield this point; by his courage and perseverance he saved the Church and, with her, society. The memory of this illustrious Pontiff, too long outraged, is now the object of universal admiration. What he had begun was continued by his successors and particularly by Innocent III.[1]

In these inevitable struggles, the Popes had recourse to the spiritual arms by which the Church recalls her guilty children to their duty, to whatsoever rank they belong. Against the obstinacy of the great, and particularly of princes, whose example was the most fatal, she reserved in her just rigor the weapon of excommunication. But nothing of all this would have sufficed, if the papacy of the middle ages had not possessed at the same time a *temporal power*, the nature of which it is important that we should clearly understand.

[1] See the history of St. Gregory VII. by Voigt. and of Innocent III. by Hurter. Also the history of the Papacy in the middle ages by Gosselin.

I. In the first place, the Pope himself was a temporal sovereign of a small state, which had been successively ceded to him during the long decline of the empire, and definitively established by Pepin the Short. This temporal sovereignty is not absolutely necessary to the papacy, as it did not exist during the first centuries; but since that epoch, it was the means by which Divine Providence maintained the spiritual authority free and independent, and "placed it above the partialities which diverse interests and state jealousies might produce." (Bossuet.) Let us add that never has a throne been occupied more worthily than the papal throne. During the space of eight hundred years there have been only three or four Popes who have not been in veneration for their sanctity; during the last three centuries there has not been one who was not of irreproachable morals; if in the interval and especially when the elections were obstructed by the temporal power, some dishonored the tiara, that only proves that after all the Popes were men, and that authority depends not upon the private conduct of him who is clothed with it.

II. The first Christians frequently had recourse to the common Father of the faithful as the natural umpire of their differences. This arbitration, often repeated, entered by degrees into the public law; it created in favor of the Popes and by the consent of princes a sort of supreme *suzerainty* in the feudal system, and, as Chateaubriand says, *a tribunal of the nations*. This power is not inherent in the papacy:

it supplied a necessity of the period. It was imposed upon the Pope as a duty. This pontifical power was less a privilege of the Pope than a right of the people. "The appeal to the Pope is a right which cannot be taken from us," said James d'Artevelde; and Flanders often had recourse to this appeal.[1] It was exercised with a wisdom which no historian of any weight has dared to deny. Thus are explained so many facts of which we mistake the character when we judge of them according to the actual state of society. It remains to be seen, after all the changes which have been introduced, what Europe has gained, and whether the system of the balance of power surpasses the paternal arbitration of the most august and the most independent authority in the world. "The interest of the human race," said an enemy of the Popes, "demands a check which shall restrain sovereigns and protect the lives of the people. This check of religion *might have been* placed by general experiment in the hands of the Popes. The first Pontiffs, by mingling with temporal quarrels only to pacify them, by reminding kings and subjects of their duties, by repressing great crimes, by reserving excommunications for the outrages, *might* always *have been* regarded as the images of God upon the earth." That which *might have been* according to Voltaire, has really existed, as much, at least, as it depended upon the Church.

III. In regard to the emperors of Germany, the Popes acted with more authority, but their situation

[1] Kervyn, *Hist. des Flanders*, t. iii.

was also exceptional. By raising up the empire of the West, the papacy had established a *Christian empire*, governed by an elective ruler. The election was held by virtue of a constitution which the elect swore to observe and which deprived him of his rights, if he violated his oath. But when will he be judged to have broken it? Who shall decide this important point? By necessity it was the duty of the Popes, and it is in this way that they released subjects from the oath of fealty. The forfeiture which resulted therefrom was a legal consequence of the German constitution.

If in other states the excommunication of princes entailed similar consequences, it was by an analogous provision of their public law. "Our decree," said Innocent III. to the French prelates, "does not affect the domain, but the sin"; and in this respect, *ratione peccati*, as Boniface VII. explained to Philip the Fair, every Christian is amenable to the judgment of the Church.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CRUSADES.

In the wars undertaken against the Mahometans we behold the papacy at the apogee of its political influence, and Christian society in all the splendor of religious heroism. It is for this two-fold reason that the crusades have been on the part of the enemies of the Church, the object of the most bitter criticisms. The glory of this age of faith offends them, and the renown which the Popes gained therefrom irritates them: therefore what are the crusades but useless, ridiculous, and unjust enterprises? Although these attacks, thanks to Catholic writers, have lost their force, they have not entirely ceased, and the sons of the crusaders are still obliged to defend their ancestors against the children of Voltaire.

We will point out the principal considerations that may be adduced in favor of the crusades.

In every question of war, the fundamental point is the lawfulness of the motives which caused it to be undertaken. Now, the crusades had for their causes not only the ordinary legitimacy of a violated right or of an invaded territory, but also the legitimacy of all the religious and social rights threatened by the Mahometans. It is not necessary to dwell

here upon the idea of the conquest of the tomb of Jesus Christ: this was a special object proposed to the piety of the faithful; but the war was between two religions and two civilizations. If the sect founded by Mahomet in 632, had only been a sect, if the Koran had only been a crude rhapsody of ridiculous prophecies and vague morality, Christianity would have employed against it only the ordinary means of the apostolate and charity; but Mahomet had inspired his adherents with the idea of propagating their religion with the sword, and a fanaticism which, after having subjugated Spain, was only arrested by the arms of Charles Martel. They were planning the conquest of the West and the destruction of civilization; against such enemies war was truly *holy*, in virtue of the most sacred principles of men and Christians. To these generous motives, add the injuries which the Mahometans did not cease to inflict upon the Christians. For a long time Sylvester II. and Sergius IV. had raised a generous voice in favor of the East. In 1074, St. Gregory VII. wrote to the Emperor: "The Christians beyond the sea who are afflicted with unheard of miseries and daily massacred like vile beasts, have sent to me, in the excess of their trouble, entreating me to assist our brothers by all the means in my power, in order that the Christian religion may not be, which God forbid, annihilated in our days." This great Pope conceived the project of a crusade, but it was not until 1095, at the Council of Clermont, after new complaints supported by the emperor of Con-

stantinople, that Christian enthusiasm responded to the discourses of Peter the Hermit and Urban II. by the cry of *God wills it.*

Instead of defending themselves against the invasions of the Mahometans, the crusaders carried the war into the heart of Islamism. This plan justified by great examples, had at first great success, but was soon followed by painful reverses. These reverses are attributable in part to the conduct of a great number of crusaders, and in part to the perfidy of the Greeks. Without the schism, the Church of the East vivified by Catholic unity, would have been able by herself, either to incorporate the Arabs, as the Church of the West had incorporated the barbarians, or drive them away from her bosom. But ambition and jealousy, which had separated her from the center of unity, rendered her faithless to the cause of God.

By these causes the crusaders failed in their immediate object, which was to deliver Jerusalem entirely and finally from the outrages of the infidels, but they attained their principal end, that of keeping the enemy busy at home during two hundred years, of prolonging the existence of the Eastern empire and securing to Christian nations a decided preponderance over the Mussulman. It is then true to say with Count de Maistre, that "the crusades have all failed and all succeeded." To this *first result* we should add others which interest European civilization in the highest degree.

The immediate results of the crusades were

I. To cause the general cessation of fraternal struggles formerly so frequent among Christian princes and thus reconstruct the union of the great Christian family.

II. To revive the faith in all hearts by their presence at the holy places, and to present a noble expiation of all the disorders that had invaded society.

The *remote results* were

I. The favorable change in the feudal system by the weakening of turbulent vassals, by the extension of the liberty of the communes, by the enfranchisement of slaves in virtue of the privilege of the holy warfare, etc., etc.

II. To extend the relations of the Christians of the West which had been up to this time too restricted, and thus to favor commerce and all the industries depending upon it.

III. To elevate the faculties of man toward the true sources of the great and the beautiful. Religious enthusiasm and the contemplation of the East awakened their minds: this was the true revival dating from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, which caused the erection of magnificent cathedrals,[1] and adorned them with Christian masterpieces of sculpture and painting; which finally, in the most important and sublime sciences, gave us St. Thomas of Aquin and Thomas à Kempis, and in letters was represented by Dante and Petrarch.

[1] Most of the grand cathedrals date from the thirteenth century: The cathedrals of Treves, Cologne, Freiburg, Strasburg, Chartres, Rheims, Amiens, Beauvais, of St. Denis and of Notre Dame at Paris, of St. Gudule at Brussels, those of Salisbury, York, Westminster, Burgos, Toledo, etc., etc.

CHAPTER XVI.

SCHISM OF THE WEST.

THE high position which the papacy occupied in the society of the middle ages, caused sovereigns to strive by all means to appropriate its influence to themselves. France, we must acknowledge, had deserved by real services the consideration and the regard shown her; unhappily she did not know how to use them with sufficient moderation. Her preponderance in the sacred college became excessive, and in the year 1303, a French Pope, Clement V., fixed his seat at Avignon; his successors imitated him, to the great displeasure of the Romans; and after the death of Gregory XI. a double election divided Christendom into *two obediences*. This was truly a great *scandal*, but we should not exaggerate its consequences. In reality,

Faith did not suffer from this fact. The scandal might exercise its fatal influence over minds not well grounded in their religion: but it, in no way, changed the divine institution. The Pope, canonically elected, was the true successor of St. Peter, and it was to him that the obedience of Christian people was directed, although there might be an error regarding the fact of the election. If we consider the election doubtful on both sides, we may say in

this case that a doubtful Pope is not a Pope, and the period of the schism was a period of *interregnum*. In any hypothesis, the faithful had only to conform themselves to their immediate pastors, and, in fact, in the two obediences there were found persons of eminent sanctity. God, who, notwithstanding the faults of men, watches over His Church, spared her during the schism, as well as under the reigns of some feeble or even unworthy Popes, dangers of another kind, difficult discussions which might lead to the still greater scandal of confusion of doctrine.

The pontifical authority necessarily received from the schism a severe blow. Never was the respect of the people exposed to a severer trial; but this respect could not be taken away from the heart of Christians, because it rested upon the divine institution. The bark of Peter was, therefore, saved, and received in this tempest a new proof of the protection of her invisible guide; but she emerged from it strained and deprived of a portion of her rigging. In other words, the pontifical authority was maintained in its essential integrity, but it was for the time being weakened within, and henceforth in decline without. We will explain this double result.

I. In order to restore peace to the Church, the Council of Constance was obliged to consider the Holy See as vacant; this could be done, because no one was able to show an unquestionable title to it. It placed its own authority above that of the doubtful Popes, and compelled them to acknowledge as the legitimate head of the Church the newly elected

Martin V. Such is the signification of the acts of this Council; they have reference to an exceptional situation of a disputed pontificate; but some theologians have attempted to make the exception pass for the rule, and to apply the case of the doubtful Popes to all exercise of the pontifical authority. Thence arose the subtleties of Gallicanism, of which advantage was afterward cunningly taken by sovereigns, on the one side, and by Jansenists, on the other. These systems have had their day. Jansenism now lives only in some theological exaggerations, the pretended *Gallican liberties* have been rejected as real slavery, and Josephism which was only an extreme expression of the same servitude, received its death blow by the Austrian concordat.

II. Exteriorly, the political influence of the Popes rapidly declined. The kings profited by it, and proceeded by the same step toward the absolutism, that was to bring the reaction, of which we are witnesses. The weakening of the papal influence was, therefore, a misfortune for the peace and civilization of the world, but it was an advantage for the Church herself. In proportion as her government ceases to be an object of ambition, she becomes stronger and purer; she labors more efficaciously for the reform of abuses. It is a remarkable fact that at the termination of the schism, the Council of Florence was upon the point of triumphing over another more inveterate schism.

The primacy of the successors of St. Peter was there acknowledged by the Greeks in the most

explicit terms, but this attempt at reunion failed through the ambition and jealousy of the Orientals; ambition and jealousy were the first cause of the schism, and they are to-day the true obstacles to reconciliation.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE INQUISITION AND TOLERATION.

In the struggles which the Church had to sustain against the heresies of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and later ones, her conduct has been assailed with extreme violence, and often through pure malignity, without the least regard for the truth. Under the influence of Voltaire and his school, "the phantom of the Inquisition" has been a bugbear to weak and prejudiced minds, and toleration a theme for craftily wrought declamations "to crush the infamous one." At the present time, this system is in disgrace, at least among those who judge according to proofs; to do it justice, it is sufficient to enunciate *principles and facts*.

Most of the accusations in this matter rest upon a confusion of the elements of the discussion; some abuses are condemned, and conclusions deduced from them, which do not touch the *real question*. In this matter, we must first of all distinguish religious from civil toleration, take into account the constitution of the society of the middle ages so different from modern constitutions, and consider the intervention of the Church and the temporal power; then we shall experience no difficulty in justifying, not particular abuses (where are there not abuses?),

but the conduct adopted by the rulers of the Catholic Church.

Toleration may be understood in different ways; first, in the sense of a purely civil, and secondly of a religious toleration. *Religious*, or dogmatic toleration, consists in approving all religions equally, and admitting all as indifferent forms of homage, which the creature pays to the Creator. This is indifference in religious matters, and, implicitly, the negation of all religious truth. Such a toleration is not only condemned by the Catholic Church, but it is rejected by good sense, as incompatible with all positive religion. "The lawfulness of ecclesiastical intolerance," says a naturalist philosopher (Jules Simon), "is above all discussion." The truth is one, and if you possess it, it is absurd to admit as true what is contrary to it.

From the fact that a man is born of parents, living in error, or that a state is wholly, or partially, under the dominion of error, nothing can be deduced against the indefeasible rights of truth. The Church having received, by the positive will of God, the deposit of religious truths, is obliged to reject and condemn all that deviates from it. In the accomplishment of this duty, she knows neither compromise, nor concessions, nor does she recoil before any power upon the earth. This is a new proof of the Divinity of her institution.

Civil toleration consists in permitting every man to practice his religion as he understands it. The purely *interior* practice of the acts of any religion

whatever, is a liberty of conscience with which no exterior authority can, or ought, to interfere. But the exterior *manifestations* of worship have never enjoyed, and will never enjoy, an absolute liberty without any restriction. Take the freest states of our time, those founded upon the complete separation of the Church and the State, would they for example permit human sacrifices or polygamy? If the existence of such practices is suspected, would not the public prosecutor institute inquiries, that is, an inquisition? If you say that it is a part of the moral law for the state to guard the foundations of public order, you simply prove that *all toleration has its limits:* you also prove that the security of states is closely connected with religious principles, and that Christian civilization cannot, whatever it may do, entirely repudiate this precious heritage. The society of the middle ages had established narrower limits; modern society has widened them; but these limits exist, even if they cause but little annoyance, and they cannot be withdrawn without exposing civilization to complete destruction.

Moreover, do not imagine that the innovators of the sixteenth century, while declaiming against the intolerance of Catholics, admitted toleration among themselves, either in right, or in practice. Calvin, after having caused Michael Servetus to be burnt as a heretic, justified his conduct by the right of the sword.[1] And see the conduct of Luther! of Henry VIII.! and of Elizabeth! princes and doctors so

[1] *Jure gladii coërcendos esse hæreticos.*

much the more blameworthy, because having rejected authority, they were inconsistent and unjust. Rousseau goes still further. Without admitting anything true in any positive religion, he declares that the state may establish a civil religion. "It belongs," says he, "to the sovereign to fix the articles. . . . . Without being able to oblige any one to believe them, he may banish from the state whoever does not believe them. . . . . That if any one, after having publicly admitted these same dogmas, conducts himself as if he did not believe them, he shall be punished with death." And all that, note it well, without being able to oblige any one to believe them. Here in truth is the gentle toleration of '93! And this toleration is that of the humanitarian philosophers, who, regretting that, at another period, they had been wanting in *audacity*, only waited for the occasion to proceed against Catholicism with *blind force*, to render its exercise *absolutely and naturally impossible, and to bury it in the mud.* Such are the expressions of Quinet in his preface to the impious and filthy works of Marnix de Sainte-Aldegonde.

But, since excesses do not justify excesses, let us resume the consideration of the true principles in this question.

I. Every society must defend its *constitutive principle.* Now, by the admission of all, the society formed and civilized by the Catholic Church rested upon the principle of religious union. Therefore, every act contrary to this union was a crime of high treason against society, and the repression of heresy

was, necessarily, an organic law of the state. To this reasoning there can be only one reply; this is to question the legitimacy of the principle itself, and to say that society had no right to establish itself upon the basis of religious unity. But

II. *The right*, not to say the duty, of thus constituting itself results from the divine truth of the religious principle which was sufficiently demonstrated to this society, and secondly from the beneficent influence of this principle upon the most important interests of civilization. Society was, therefore, in possession of the truth, and of the truth most essential to its prosperity and stability: its duty was, therefore, to protect it by all the means in its power. But, you will say, in acting thus, it obliged all its members, even in the future, to maintain this truth: is it not the same to-day in regard to every fundamental truth? Does modern society destroy individual liberty by imposing in advance the principle of property, of monogamy, etc.? — To elevate individual rights above those of society, as some sophists do, at the present day; to assure to every one the *absolute*, *indefeasible* liberty of raising himself above the fundamental truths, acquired by society, is to provoke the destruction of the little that the revolutions have left us, is to return to barbarism. Every society should live by truth, and according as it approaches and recedes from the complete possession of the truth, it secures, or subverts, its happiness and stability.

III. In theory, as a social system, the funda-

mental principle of the middle ages is perfectly justified; what will be the result, if we consider the *fact* of its introduction into this society? This grand principle of religious unity did not originate from a constituent assembly, like modern constitutions; it was not established by decree; it existed in the ideas; it was the necessary result of Christian civilization. Good laws, it is commonly said, are those that previously existed in the ideas and customs of the time: could we not cite many constitutions, or modern laws, which are also the faithful expression of the ideas and necessities of society?

Society having the right to suppress heresies, it was the duty of the established authorities to execute the laws enacted for this purpose, and to adopt measures, adequate to the necessities of each period. It was in circumstances of exceptional gravity, that the *Inquisition* was established. The Waldenses and the Albigenses, not content with spreading their errors, had taken up arms and excited everywhere the spirit of revolt against the two authorities. The Church first tried to bring them back to their duties by instruction and persuasion. When these means were found to be powerless, the two powers, equally menaced, joined hands, one, to establish the crime by the examination of the guilty, the other, to apply the punishment. In this way the Inquisition was an ecclesiastical, rather than a civil, institution. It was not the same with the Spanish Inquisition. This was a royal tribunal of which all the members, both ecclesiastics and laics, were nominated by the

sovereign, and not under the authority of the Church; it was an instrument in the hands of the kings of Spain, to cause the triumph of the Spanish nationality with the Christian faith over the plots of the Jews and the Moors.

The Ecclesiastical Inquisition was an institution unassailable from the point of view of the principles that governed society; if we consider the facts, it was a tribunal of reconciliation rather than of severity. The regulations of Innocent III. and Gregory IX. tended specially to impress upon it this character, and to moderate the excessive zeal of temporal princes. We have a remarkable proof of this in the petition of the Templars to be judged by the Inquisition, in preference to any other tribunal. We may say boldly that no tribunal has ever acted with more mildness than the ecclesiastical Inquisition, and, particularly, the Roman Inquisition. Never did the Inquisition of Rome decree the execution of a death sentence. Thus, it is not to this tribunal that the serious reproaches of cruelty and tyranny are brought, but to the Spanish Inquisition.

In the question of the *Spanish Inquisition*, the Church is not directly interested. Instead of acknowledging it as their work, the Popes protested against the usurpation of their rights, and against the severity of some inquisitors. Several times they even delivered the accused from the Inquisition, either by summoning them to Rome, or by anticipating the judgment by a sentence of absolution. This question is, therefore, exclusively Spanish.

But this is no reason to admit the calumnies of Llorente and Voltaire. The Spanish Inquisition was not "a tribunal of blood and carnage"; this calumny has been victoriously refuted by Muzzarelli,[1] by the Count de Maistre,[2] by P. Gautrel,[3] by Abbè Vayrac,[4] and quite recently by Abbè Hefele in his *Histoire du Cardinal Ximenès.*

These conscientious labors establish the following facts:

I. The Spanish Inquisition proceeded according to rules, which carefully protected the rights of the accused, rules drawn up in accordance with the demand of Isabella, by the celebrated Torquemada himself, the observance of which the Popes constantly recommended. Can we say as much of the English Inquisition?[5]

II. This tribunal did not withdraw men from the faith of their fathers as the heretical tribunals did; it did not exercise its jurisdiction over unbaptized infidels, but over apostates and the relapsed, particularly over the Jews and the Moors who, converted in appearance, were guilty of underhand intrigues against the Church and the State. In this respect, Spain, recently delivered from the oppression of the enemies of the Christian name, and soon

[1] *Inquisition.* [2] *Lettres sur l' Inquisition.*

[3] *La Divinitè de la Religion Catholique.*

[4] *Etat present de l' Espagne.*

[5] According to William Cobbett, a Protestant writer, "The good Queen Bess (Elizabeth) in one year of her reign committed more cruelty than the Spanish Inquisition during the whole of its existence." Letters upon England.

afterward menaced by Protestantism, was obliged to use more vigilance.

III. The number of those who are styled "the victims of the Inquisition," has been grossly exaggerated by Llorente, from suppositions whose falsity is evident. In this number are to be included not only apostates, but also usurers, adulterers, those guilty of sacrilege, and criminals of all kinds, who were submitted to the tribunal of the Inquisition.

IV. The judgment of the holy office was limited to the declaration of the guilt, or innocence, of the accused, and the punishments, afterward decreed by another tribunal, were conformable to the criminal justice of all other tribunals. The prisons of the Inquisition were more healthy than others, and the *autos-da-fé* were often edifying spectacles of retractation and penitence. What is there here to be compared with the horrors committed by Protestants in many other countries?

V. By this tribunal, Spain escaped the horrors of the religious wars, which filled the rest of Europe with carnage, and it largely contributed elsewhere to save the interests of Catholicism.

The wars of religion have also served as a theme for the declamations of Protestants and infidels. Nothing is easier, however, than to justify the Church in this regard.

I. The Church has never admitted the Mahometan principle of imposing the Gospel by force. She has been content with protecting the rights, which

she had acquired, either in the society formed by her, or over the individuals, who made her a promise of fidelity.

II. *The religious wars* of the thirteenth century are the work of heresy and its revolts against the fundamental principle of society. The heretics of this period as well as the Protestants of the sixteenth century, were not content with disputing, they committed the most barbarous acts against person and property; they were enemies of order and civilization, whom the sovereigns were obliged to restrain and punish by force of arms.[1]

III. That in these just and necessary wars there were cruel reprisals on the part of the Catholic princes, is a fact to be deplored, but very difficult to have prevented. It would be extremely unjust to impute these excesses to the Church, or to Religion.

IV. It would be still more unjust to impute to her the acts of barbarism, inspired by an inhuman political policy, such as the massacre of St. Bartholomew. Gregory XIII. believed upon the report of the court of France that the king had escaped from a conspiracy, and he returned thanks to God for his safety; but neither he, nor the clergy, took any part in this proscription. Such acts are explained by the fury which had seized the two parties; no one

[1] See *L'Histoire des Croisades contre les Albigeois*, by Fr. Langlois, and the History of Innocent III. by Hurter. Innocent III. was right in saying that the Albigenses were more dangerous than the Saracens.

defends them, and it is bad faith that takes advantage of them.[1]

[1] Consult *Protestantism and Catholicity compared, in their effects on the civilization of Europe*, by Balmes; *Le tableau historique et pittoresque de Paris;* the tenth letter of Cobbett; and especially *L'histoire de la S. Barthélemy*, by Audin. It will be seen, by the documents of the sixteenth century, that the number of victims has been greatly exaggerated.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PROTESTANTISM.

EVERY century has had its heresies. Most sects after having made some progress have returned to their nothingness after leaving feeble traces of their passage. This was the case during fifteen centuries; but the sixteenth opens the era of the great apostasy, of which we see the last sad results. Then it was not a simple heresy, but the spirit of heresy unchained against all ecclesiastical tradition; then religious revolt was erected into a system, and the hatred of authority carried to a frenzy. We refuted this system in advance when we demonstrated the divine prerogatives of religious authority in the Church, and particularly when we overthrew the vain scaffolding which serves as a common prop to all the heresies. In this respect, Protestantism differs from the sects which preceded it, only by its violence and the extent of its ravages. It will be sufficient, therefore, at present, to furnish some special observations upon its origin, character, variations and different results.

Protestantism everywhere had a shameful origin. Ambition, cupidity, and especially libertinism, were the true motives of Luther, Calvin, Zuinglius, and Henry VIII. Frederick, the philosopher king of

Prussia, thus sums up in his *Memoirs* the causes of the progress of the reform: "In Germany it was the work of interest, in England of lust, and in France of novelty." "Perhaps the world has never in any age," says Cobbett (seventh letter), "seen a nest of such miscreants as Luther, Zuinglius, Calvin, Beza, and the rest of the distinguished reformers of the Catholic religion. Every one of them was notorious for the most scandalous vices, even according to the full confession of his own followers. They agreed in nothing but in the doctrine, that *good works were useless;* and their lives proved the sincerity of their teaching; for there was not a man of them whose acts did not merit a halter." Protestants themselves blush at the notorious infamies of their chiefs. Their portrait is drawn from their own writings, as we may see in their history written by Audin, and modesty shrinks from the expressions of these pretended reformers. Even had they been pure they should have commenced by proving their mission; especially they who pretended to reform everything, dogma and discipline, the teaching and government of the Church: for sole proof, Luther gave himself the title of *Ecclesiastes, by the grace of God*, and relates in that gross tone which was familiar to him, his conferences with the devil. Instead of reforming himself, the apostate monk very soon gave the scandal of a sacrilegious marriage, and plunged into every excess. The other heresiarchs only imitated him, and Henry the VIII. surpassed them all by his divorces and cruelties. Without mission, without

morals, Luther and his imitators made sport of the gravest points of religion. According to the interest of the moment they maintained the *pro* and *con* with incredible levity.

If a preacher went too far for Luther, he invoked against him the constant tradition of the Church; did any one oppose to him this same constant tradition, then "all the Fathers erred in the faith. . . . . St. Jerome is a heretic, Chrysostom is a babbler, etc." In all these dogmatizers we can discern neither sincere conviction nor upright intention. This is demonstrated by Bossuet in his *Histoire des Variations:* "They sported," he concludes, "I say it without exaggeration, with the name of confession of faith: and nothing was less serious in the new *Reform* than what is most serious in religion."

"We do not know," says J. J. Rousseau,[1] "either what they believed, or what they disbelieved: we do not know even what they pretended to believe."

And these men declaimed against abuses, and for reform! They themselves fomented abuses and needed reform: it is to their equals that the Council of Trent applied those wise regulations which introduced true reform.

The *character* of this religious revolution was such as we should expect from the motives which inspired it. Reform was only a pretext, a word suitable to cover up an entirely different design: they declaimed loudly against the tyranny of Rome; but "it is not true," as M. Guizot acknowledges,

[1] *Seconde lettre de la montagne.*

"that in the sixteenth century the court of Rome was very tyrannical, and that abuses properly speaking were more crying than ever: never was the ecclesiastical government more tolerant." Thus the innovators did not care for any religious reform; what they desired, M. Guizot declares in these terms: "an insurrection of the human mind against absolute power in the spiritual order. Such is," says he, "in my view the true general and dominant character of the reform."

Luther, however, did not reach this position all at once; after the condemnation of his first errors upon indulgences, confession, purgatory, the Mass, he appealed to the Pope, then from the Pope wrongly informed to the Pope better informed; then from the Pope to the Council, then from all authority to private inspiration. Note this: it was *private inspiration* and not *natural reason* to which Luther appealed. The latter according to Luther and Calvin can only deceive, in the same way as free will is only a chimera of the papists. It is in this sense that we must correct the ideas of M. Guizot, and many others who speak without knowledge of the enthralment of the subjective principle of man and of the emancipation of reason by the reformers! In this state of revolt Luther turned against the ecclesiastical authority with blind fury. Turks before papists, became his war cry. Thenceforward he respected no dogma, and the pretended reformer went so far as to deny the necessity of good works and the existence of free-will. Still worse; by an

extraordinary contradiction, while rejecting all religious authority, he pretended that others should submit to his own, and to get even with his contradictors, he spared neither insult nor abuse: the other heresiarchs paid him back in his own coin.

To sum up:

I. The pretended reform, instead of reforming morals and discipline, the sole object of reform in the Church of Jesus Christ, carried the people by its teaching and example, into all the excesses of an unbridled corruption. In 1533, Luther complains of this corruption in a sermon: "Since the preaching of our doctrine the world becomes every day worse, more wicked, more shameless. Devils precipitate themselves in legions upon those men who in the pure light of the Gospel are more covetous, more immodest, more detestable than they formerly were under the papacy. . . . ."

II. It applied reforms to that which is above all reform; to the revealed dogmas and to the divine constitution of the Church.

III. It promulgated no principle except one of destruction. The rebellion that constitutes its essence can produce only a negative religion, and consequently the denial of all religion. If some dogma yet survives in this system, it is in spite of its principle.

Protestantism in separating from the Catholic Church, did not desire to renounce Jesus Christ. By rejecting the authority which unites the faithful to their head, it must seek some new bond of attach-

ment to Him. Hence originated the Protestant systems regarding the Church and the rule of faith. It will be easy to see that these systems were invented only to supply the necessities of a desperate cause.

I. The Church existed fifteen centuries with her authority, her dogmas, her sacraments, her worship, all of which Protestantism had abolished or modified, and which all Christian antiquity had extolled. They were, therefore, obliged to condemn this Church, and to declare her full of errors: they went so far as to say that she was the Babylon of the Apocalypse, and that the Pope was Antichrist; but whence did they come, and by what chain do they trace their origin back to Jesus Christ? They asserted that the errors of the Roman Church were recent, and that Protestantism had for itself the primitive Church; but it was useless for them to go back, first to St. Augustine, then to St. Cyprian: all the centuries testify against them, and the facts of the primitive Church which we have narrated, are sufficient to overthrow this system. They had recourse also to the sects which had appeared in the course of those centuries, but those sects, discordant with one another, do not agree with the principle of separation which Protestantism originated. Finally, they invented an *invisible* Church: a ridiculous chimera, contrary to the plainest texts of Scripture and of the Fathers, and which, to every reasonable man, amounts to the denial of the establishment of any Church whatever. Protestantism had no Church in the past, and its principles of rebellion and pri-

vate inspiration do not permit it to have one in the present. It is united to the divine Founder of the Church only in the same way that certain philosophic schools acknowledge Plato and Aristotle as their masters.

II. Obliged to reject the spiritual authority and ecclesiastical tradition, Protestants have only the Bible for their sole rule of faith. Since they have been subdivided into innumerable sects, they cannot even agree upon any interpretation of the Bible, and hence their last resource is to depend upon a dead letter: the Bible, not only without direction, but without explanation. To do justice to this system, it was sufficient to have previously established the fact of the institution and organization of the Church. Moreover, the Bible can be the sole rule of faith only:

I. Through certainty of its divine character; a certainty impossible without authority;

II. On condition that the Bible attributes to itself this character of being the sole rule of faith, which it entirely fails to do;

III. On condition of being so clear as not to admit of differences of interpretation; now, even during the lifetime of the heresiarchs, the single text of the Last Supper was the object of a host of discordant interpretations.[1] What will be the result if there are different translations?

[1] A Protestant minister of Bâle wrote at the beginning of his Bible the following distich:

Hic liber est in quo quærit sua dogmata quisque
Invenit pariter dogmata quisque sua.

"One cannot change one dogma without disturbing the whole edifice of revelation," remarks a skeptic (M. Laurent). Once launched upon the sea of arbitrary interpretations, without pilot, without chart, without anchor, Protestantism must circumnavigate the whole fatal circle of human aberrations, without ever being able to establish itself upon any creed. This instability, a consequence of its principle, received an extraordinary impulse from the state of the human mind at this period. To listen to M. Guizot, "the high degree of civilization and culture to which modern nations have attained, justified the Protestant rebellion." This is entirely contrary to truth; the living rule of authority is never more necessary than during the periods of progress and intellectual activity. What has happened to Protestantism? The history of its variations written by Bossuet forms only the first chapter of the still more astonishing transformations which we have since seen. Protestants have realized what this great man predicted: if they are consistent they become deists or even atheists, unless they return to the fold of the Church. For a long time Jesus Christ, in the eyes of their leaders, has been nothing more than a remarkable man, even if he is not a simple myth, the representative of an idea; the Bible, to the Protestant commentators of Germany, is but the first element of a far more transcendental religion which they have brought forth. Rationalism led them to naturalism, which is the denial of all revealed religion. Those who do not proceed so far

as this, and who still hold to some fragment of Christianity, unite upon some fundamental dogmas, not as true dogmas, but as a means of agreement: they even take pains to declare that this is only a provisional understanding and that it involves no confession of faith in regard to the Bible. What shall we say, in fact, when by the admission of the Baron de Starch "there is not one single point of the Christian faith which we have not seen openly attacked by the Protestant ministers themselves"; when their religion, according to Shérer, "presents only a Socinianism shameless in itself, a refined rationalism, without teaching, without consistency"? We might fill volumes with similar acknowledgments.

Let us take the situation most favorable to Protestantism, that of the Anglican Church, which by the retention of the episcopate has separated the least from Catholic tradition. After many futile attempts she believed that she had adopted a uniform creed in the thirty-nine articles of Elizabeth: at the present day, she is at a loss what to believe upon the efficacy of baptism, upon confession, upon the real presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. She has already produced an immense number of discordant sects: she is maintained at present by the allurement of immense revenues, but she hastens surely toward complete decomposition: she will either be absorbed by German naturalism, or she will resume the Catholic faith which constituted her glory during so many centuries.

All these variations are the rigorous consequence

of the Protestant principle. A negative and rebellious religion can give no positive result; it necessarily leads to universal doubt, to indifference, to irreligion. As fast as the principle develops, the consequences appear. As a religious system, Protestantism is condemned by its results as well as by the reasons drawn from the institution of Jesus Christ; but the Catholic religion cannot be destroyed without overturning the foundations of society, and facts demonstrate the fatal influence of Protestantism upon the social order. We will point out some of them.

I. Protestantism subjected the Church to the temporal power. To gain a foothold in its revolt against the Church, it began by offering to princes the wealth of the Church: this explains its progress in Germany and England.[1] At the same time it flattered their passions by sacrificing for their rulers the most important points of Christian morality. Luther permitted the elector of Hesse to have two wives, and Henry VIII. considered himself authorized to change his wife as often as he pleased: from concession to concession, the princes found themselves placed each one at the head of his national

[1] Jurien, a sworn enemy of the Catholic Church, acknowledges that "everywhere the Reform was effected by the power of princes: at Geneva, by the senate; in Holland, by the States-general; in Denmark, Sweden, England, and Scotland by kings and parliaments. They were not contented," says he, "with granting more liberty to the partisans of the Reform, they robbed the papists of their Churches, and forbade all public exercise of their religion."

Church, and they used this usurped headship with a despotism hitherto unknown. Thus the pretended religious liberty was only a change by which Protestants gained, in place of a legitimate and paternal authority, an illegitimate master who was the more despotic, inasmuch as he united in his person the prerogatives of the two powers. The Catholic states themselves have experienced the consequences of these systems: France had her Gallican liberties or rather slavery; Austria, her Josephism.

II. By investing the temporal prince with the supreme direction of the Church, the pretended reform suppressed the valuable counterpoise which the spiritual authority had hitherto opposed to the domination of sovereigns; it created the modern despotism. England who owed her Magna Charta to the Catholics, saw herself abandoned to the sanguinary caprices of Henry VIII., and Germany saw the head of the Teutonic order transformed, thanks to his apostasy, into an absolute monarch. The temptation to imitate them gained by degrees upon the Catholic princes, and some time after, the political situation could be epitomized in this saying of Louis XIV.: *I am the state.*

III. But every excess is followed by a reaction; and we would particularly note that the reaction was also a direct consequence of the insurrectionary principle of Protestantism. Despotism had been on its part only a concession granted for the purpose of destroying the religious constitution of the middle ages; its principles, essentially revolutionary and

anarchical, undermined all authority and logically introduced, in theory, the school of Rousseau and Voltaire, and in practice the bloody insurrections whose end we have not yet seen.

These consequences have not escaped the notice of Protestants. According to Grotius: "Wherever the principles of Calvin have penetrated, they have carried disturbance"; and O'Callaghan concludes his studies upon Protestantism by these words: "Society has been shaken even to its foundation." "We must not," says Montague, "leave to the judgment of every one the knowledge of his right; we must prescribe it to him. . . . Otherwise, according to the imbecility and infinite variety of our reasons and opinions, we should invent duties that would set us to devouring one another."

IV. By destroying the old religion, Protestantism had delivered the monasteries over to pillage and suppressed the religious state; but by that act they had deprived the people of their asylums and the state itself of its best resources; and instead of providing any new resource, it had extinguished charity by denying the utility of good works; it created pauperism. "A married priesthood," says Cobbett, "and pauperism and poor rates, all came upon this country [England] at one and the same moment." [1] This plague spot of modern society is observed in the richest states, it resists all the efforts of philan-

[1] See the Letters of Cobbett, who develops this subject. Hume acknowledges that the true foundation of the reform in England was (with the lust of the king) the desire of stealing the riches of the churches and monasteries.

throphy, it seems to increase in proportion to the riches accumulated by commerce and industry. There is only one remedy, and that is Catholic charity: because it alone comprehends the dignity of the poor of Jesus Christ, it alone possesses the devotion which creates durable resources and which produces the Sisters of Charity.

V. Was Protestantism favorable to the intellectual movement of this period? This has been asserted, but falsely. Long before Luther, European society finally triumphing over all the obstacles of barbarism through the influence of the Catholic Church, made a decided advance in the way of all improvements. All the branches of human knowledge were cultivated with extraordinary ardor, and every day new discoveries (that of printing in particular), appeared to enrich the domain of the sciences and urged the human mind on to new conquests. What part did Protestantism take in this new movement? For reply we will cite a few authorities. M. Cousin writes: "I am no great partisan of the sixteenth century: it crushed the middle ages and profound philosophy; it destroyed much and rebuilt nothing." What was the part of Protestantism in this sixteenth century? According to Schiller (Thirty Years' War), "The Reform brought back the savage and barbarous manners of the past and arrested by more than half a century the onward march of civilization." What did it accomplish in literature? What can be expected from a system which in exterior worship affected, according to the expression of Leibnitz, "the dis-

dain of a dull simplicity"? "By curtailing the imagination from the faculties of man," says Chateaubriand, "the Reformation clipped the wings of genius and set her on foot. . . . It cramped genius in eloquence, poetry and the arts." All that we can say in its favor, is that by its revolt against the Church, it excited men of genius to defend the truth and thus served letters and the sciences the same as a pestilence serves the progress of medicine.

Protestantism being such, shameful in its origin, its system absurd, fatal in its results, possessing no mark of the true religion, it may appear astonishing that so many men persevere in it. To explain this phenomenon, it is sufficient to remark that they are retained, some by their interests and their passions, others by their prejudices, which Protestant ministers are careful to keep alive. Not having any positive religion upon which they can agree, Protestants make their teaching consist of a morality sufficiently vague to annoy no one, and of calumnies against the Catholic Church. To listen to them, "the Catholic is obliged to believe with humility all the reveries that it pleases the Pope to dictate; he adores the saints, their images and their relics, he makes all his worship consist in exterior ceremonies; to obtain the pardon of all crimes it is sufficient to be absolved; with money he obtains the pardon of all actual or future sins, etc." The youngest Catholic child can reply to these absurdities. The only accusation at all plausible, and by which Protestants deceive a great many simple people, is that the Catholic Church does not permit all the faithful to read the

Bible in their vulgar tongue. To give an appearance of truth to this charge, they pretend that the Church suppresses the Bible or only takes what suits her, and they continually repeat some isolated texts which they skillfully turn in favor of their system. Now, it is precisely on account of these abuses of the sacred texts that the Church has been obliged to employ some restrictions to the reading of the Bible. These restrictions date from the time of the heresy of the Waldenses and the Albigenses; they have become more necessary since Protestantism delivered the Bible up to private interpretation as the only rule of faith, and especially since it inundated the world with spurious Bibles.[1]

These restrictions do not concern the reading of the Bible in the *vulgar tongue* which is not forbidden when the version is approved by the Holy See, and when it is published with notes taken from the holy Fathers or other learned and Catholic authors.[2] Is this the suppression of the Bible? After all the Protestant vagaries, even upon clear texts (all are not clear), can anything be more reasonable? No: the Church does not desire the faithful to be ignorant of these holy books, she breaks the bread of the word of God to her children, she communicates the Bible to them in the measure of a wise discretion.

[1] See the encyclical letters of Leo XII. and Pius VIII. upon Bible societies. According to St. Augustine, "A false interpretation, and for a still stronger reason, a falsification of the text, changes the word of God into that of man, or even into that of the devil."

[2] Decree of 1757.

CHAPTER XIX.

COMPENSATIONS.

The Catholic Church experienced a severe trial, but she was neither astonished at it, nor overwhelmed. "What matters it after all if a few branches are torn from her? Her vigor is not thereby destroyed, she puts forth other branches and the pruning of the superfluous wood only serves to improve her fruits." (Bossuet, *Hist. Univ.*)

It is thus that the efforts of heresy contribute to the glorification of the work of Jesus Christ; and the more violence it displays, the more it excites the Church to develop the principles of resurrection and life which her divine Founder placed in her bosom. In this light Protestantism has been the occasion of incalculable good. It is very true that it has robbed the Church of a great number of her children; but this loss brings with it the first *compensation:* that of ridding the Church (then as at the present day), of that element which was the most impure and the most opposed to all real reformation of morals. Had the Church consented to compromise upon the indissolubility of marriage, or upon the celibacy of the clergy, she might have retained England and a great part of Germany: but she does not consent to such compromises. "States would be destroyed," ob-

serves Pascal, "if they did not often make the laws bend to necessity, but the Church has never suffered or permitted such deviations." Her severity on this occasion was a first triumph, and proved as it were the forerunner of the great measures which she adopted at the holy Council of Trent.

The most important fact in the modern history of the Church is, without dispute, the assembling of the Council of Trent. The body of pastors were at last about to pronounce upon the questions raised by Luther and his disciples: either the Church was only an empty name, or here was to be found the final solution of them. Every one understood the bearing which this unanimous utterance of the Church would have. As long as the assembling of the Council appeared impossible, Protestants had appealed to its decisions; when it actually assembled, they refused to acknowledge any authority in it: they would have wished at the most to dispute by taking as a basis the absolute independence laid down by the Reform, which would be to decide in advance in their favor the fundamental question of the very constitution of the Church. This was to reject the Council. The latter did not fail to accomplish its work. It passed in review all the errors of modern times, confounded them by the authority of all the past centuries and expressed in the most luminous manner the Catholic doctrine upon all the points of discussion. Holy Scripture, tradition, the Most Holy Trinity, original sin, justification, the holy sacrifice of the Mass, indulgences: a complete body of doc-

trine was submitted to the laborious sessions of the Council and after mature examination, promulgated in its decrees with a precision that henceforward defies all subterfuges. Even aside from the irresistible proofs upon which are founded the decisions of Trent, they form a system to which many Protestants could not refrain from rendering homage.

"The study of the Catholic system," says one of them,[1] "clearly convinces us that it is logical, that it is beautiful, that the foundations upon which it rests are deeply rooted in human nature. . . . I am persuaded that any one can sustain victoriously this dilemma: either Jesus Christ did not establish a Church, or the Catholic Church is the one which He established." What an acknowledgment!

The exposition of Catholic doctrine did not satisfy the zeal of the Fathers of Trent. They knew that grave abuses had crept in among Christian people and that the progress of Protestantism resulted especially from the disorders of a part of the clergy. The Council resolved to effect a real reform, and we may say that never was a work more perfectly accomplished. It is to the disciplinary decrees of this august assembly that we owe ecclesiastical seminaries, the precautions taken before candidates are admitted to holy orders, the rules upon the collation of benefices, the regulations concerning the exercise of pastoral functions; in a word, what since that time has secured to the Church a succession of irreproachable ministers. Then, as upon all great

[1] Thesis of Ernest Naville, Professor at Geneva, 1839.

occasions, the action of the religious orders seconded the designs of the pastors. New institutions furnished the Church not with more monks, but with *regular priests*, among whom it is proper to make a special mention of the Society of Jesus. We know well the immense labors of the first children of St. Ignatius in the Council, and the zeal displayed by the entire body throughout all parts of the globe.

All these efforts were nevertheless to remain barren in regard to those whom heresy had rendered deaf to the voice of truth. For them the Pope was only Antichrist, Rome, the harlot of the Apocalypse: the mind was perverted as well as the heart: faith was extinct. But this divine torch is destined to enlighten the whole earth: if it leaves in darkness obstinate minds, it is, according to St. John and Jesus Christ Himself, to carry the benefits of its light to those, who are still in the shadow of death. The defection of a part of Europe is compensated for by the accession of the extreme east and the tribes of the new world. St. Francis Xavier has the glory of opening these noble missions, and during three centuries he has been followed by an innumerable band of holy missionaries. Their successes, while consoling the Church for her losses, are still a reply to the calumnies of heretics: they furnish a new proof of the inexhaustible fecundity of the Catholic apostolate.[1]

Another compensation was reserved to the Church, a precious compensation by which God seems to

[1] Leopold Ranke, a Protestant writer, gives a magnificent picture of Catholic missions in his *History of the Papacy*.

have wished to give a striking contradiction to the most hateful accusations of Luther. How does the Catholic Church, that Babylon according to him, which infects with her corruption all belonging to her, reply to these outrages? Not only by the wisest regulations, not only by the wonders of her preaching, but even by the spectacle of the most sublime virtues. It is a wonderful fact, certainly, that the century of the great apostasy should also be the century of the most extraordinary sanctity; that Luther, Calvin, and Henry VIII. should appear upon the earth at the same time as St. Charles Borromeo, St. Ignatius, St. Francis Xavier, St. Francis Borgia, St. Philip Neri, St. Louis Bertrand, St. John of God, St. Stanislaus Kostka, followed soon after by St. Francis de Sales, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Teresa, St. Peter of Alcantara, St. John of the Cross, St. Aloysius Gonzaga, St. Magdalen de Pazzi, St. Catherine de Ricci, St. Jane Frances de Chantal, and many others. To display in a clearer light this supereminent sanctity, God conferred upon the most of these heroic children of the Church supernatural gifts, the proofs of which defy all criticism. The miracles wrought by the intercession of these saints, before receiving the approbation of the Church, are submitted, according to the constitution of Benedict XIV. (*de canonizatione sanctorum*, 14), to investigations at least as rigorous as those required by the best regulated tribunals to pronounce capital sentence. Most Protestants and infidels evade by raillery the examination of these facts; but those who seek with sincerity to

examine them, acknowledge the finger of God to be here, and envy us the possession of superior men who were the instruments of his power. *Talis cum sis, utinam noster esses!* Would that this incomparable man belonged to us, exclaimed a Protestant at the sight of the miracles performed by St. Francis Xavier.

CHAPTER XX.

MODERN PHILOSOPHY.

PROTESTANTISM had borne its fruits. By depriving man of the salutary direction of a divine authority, it had precipitated him into all the aberrations of philosophic pride. It is upon the field of philosophy that the Church must henceforward encounter her most implacable enemies. Here she will no longer have to defend this or that interpretation of the Bible, such or such an apostolic tradition, but the very foundation of human knowledge, the first principles of all religious demonstration. More than ever she will need the assistance of the Holy Ghost, to repress all excesses, and to defend herself against the danger of certain specious systems. More than ever also, she will need strength and confidence to maintain the rights of truth against the most formidable leagues and persecutions.

The thorough examination of these questions does not enter into our plan; it will be enough for us to point out the character of those possessing the most importance.

Systematic war against the Church was inaugurated in the name of modern philosophy by Voltaire and Rousseau, aided by the phalanx of encyclope-

dists, and secretly seconded by the Jansenists.[1] Voltaire inspired with a furious hate, and deficient in erudition, delighted in spreading calumny and sarcasm in every form. Rousseau describes himself as a sophist, who delighted in "proving the *pro* and *con*, and being persuaded of everything and believing nothing." These two men, while heaping upon each other the grossest insults, agreed in their work of perverting the new generation. One succeeded in detaching a Christian nation from all that she had learned to venerate; he was only an impious destroyer; the other laid down the principles of that false liberty whence sprang the pretended rights of man; different *civil constitutions*, each new one surpassing all former ones in extravagance. Voltaire in the eyes of intelligent men, is only an ignorant railer, the philosopher of libertines; Rousseau is perpetuated in a host of modern deists. Neither advanced a serious argument against the divine fact of the Christian revelation; but their systems by a natural consequence brought France to the reign of terror, and to the worship of the goddess of reason. The ignominy of such a worship would appear scarcely credible, and yet we need not be astonished at it. If you deprive man of all religion, he has no longer any curb; if you take from him reasonable

[1] Jansenism is only a mitigated Calvinism. This hypocritical sect used much cunning in undermining the pontifical authority, and in causing the most exaggerated pretensions of Gallicanism to prevail, such as *appeals of error, the right of precaution, etc.*

faith he falls into superstition, and through superstition into all the excesses of paganism.

But it is from the very cradle of heresy that the most destructive philosophical systems have sprung. From negation to negation German Protestantism has come to doubt everything, even the existence of the visible world, and the reality of the thinking principle. To insure the acceptance of this *transcendental idealism* they have employed the most subtile abstractions, and have involved themselves in the most obscure formulas: to appear profound the disciple has outdone the master. A school of incredible skepticism has established itself in Germany. "In truth," said Pascal of the infidels of his time, "it is glorious for religion to have as enemies men so unreasonable." In these reveries of the Kants and the Hegels, there is not perhaps great danger to the practice of a material life, in which man does not easily renounce his reason, but religion, already weakened in a great number, receives from them a mortal wound.

The spectacle of so many minds led astray by a proud reason, was of a nature to inspire others with an extreme distrust and to lead them to the opposite excess: this has happened. From the bosom of Catholicism arose a school, already celebrated, which reduces human reason to an entirely insignificant *rôle*. "We have," according to Lamennais, "no certainty except by the authority of common sense: reason alone was in everything and always essentially fallible." This disturbed in a different manner the

foundations of faith, while pretending to give them a more solid support. The Church has proscribed this system, and she continues to proscribe it even in the mitigated systems which underrate the importance of human reason.

But scarcely had she suppressed these errors upon one point, than her vigilance was excited elsewhere by entirely opposite tendencies. A German theologian, Doctor Hermes, thought that concessions should be made to rationalism, but he made them so extensive that his system tended to nothing else than "to submit all dogmas and all mysteries to the preliminary demonstration of reason." The Church intervened and maintained once more by a sovereign decision the *just relations between reason and revelation.*

To the philosophical systems of Lamennais was joined a social system in which certain liberties, such as the liberty of worship, of the press, etc., were proclaimed as absolute rights, inherent in human nature. In this sense, these pretended rights were in manifest opposition with the Catholic doctrine of all ages; and by condemning them in the celebrated Encyclical *Mirari vos*, Gregory XVI. only made the application of what his predecessors had taught. True liberty is the daughter of religious truth.[1] It is the Catholic Church which introduced liberty into the world; but this liberty is not license; it may co-exist with and tolerate the evil of the day,

[1] *Veritas liberabit vos. . . . Si ergo vos Filius liberaverit, vere liberi eritis.* S. Joan. viii. 32, 36.

but it cannot acknowledge in the evil any essential and absolute right. To go beyond that is to proclaim no longer civil toleration, but indifference in religious matters.

The present anti-Catholic philosophy is distinguished by two essential characteristics :

I. *Naturalism* or religious rationalism which rejects *a priori*, and as incompatible with the rights of reason, all supernatural or divine revelation. It is not, therefore, exclusively directed against the Church, but against everything referring to Christ and against every positive religion : for there is no religion that does not rest upon a true or supposed intervention of the Deity. This philosophy is born of Protestantism, it is even a logical consequence of its principle. Thus by the acknowledgment of M. Scherer, *naturalism has taken possession of three-fourths of the Protestant pulpits.*[1] This system is set forth in numberless books and often with a false air of respect for the religion of our fathers, and with the pretense of reconciling reason with revelation. Such a writer does not pretend to meddle with theology, but he desires to be free in the field of philosophy, and to settle philosophically all the duties of man ; he then proceeds to insinuate that revelation is useless to the souls of the learned, that it is out of date and that philosophy is sufficient for the men of the nineteenth century: he ends by openly claiming, in the name of reason, the intellect-

[1] On the Actual State of the Reformed Church in France, 1844.

ual direction of the modern world. In his wise moments, he acknowledges that, "philosophers in all ages have corrupted science by mingling the true with the false, and that there is no part of human science in which men of the most elevated genius have not fallen into great error, and even into gross absurdities. He ought, therefore, to conclude that true science is inseparable from religion, but he is resolved to do without revelation which in his eyes does not and cannot exist.

What shall we reply to this incoherent philosophy? What reply would you make to him who pretended that it was impossible for you to take a step? The best reply would be to walk. This is what we have done in this historical study of the Christian revelation.

II. *Pantheism.* God banished by naturalism to an unattainable distance from human society, too far to make Himself heard by man, is very near being an inactive god, an empty name. Infidel philosophy retains this name in order the more easily to mislead its dupes; on the other hand it has deified all nature: it denies the Deity.

Connected with this system is that of the *indefinite progress of deified nature.* This is styled the essential law of the human race, the grand synthesis of its history. Then all events whether fortunate or the reverse, all religions whether revealed or not, are only developments by which the human race proceeds fatally toward a supreme unity. What is this unity? It is unknown, but it is evident that it is

not Christian unity. The latter, it is said, no longer answers the actual needs of the human mind. This is the substance of many books filled with false erudition!

Will you refute the absurdities of this philosophy? Will you discuss with it concerning matter and the infinite? You will overthrow its arguments without doubt, but in a subject so obscure it will escape you by subterfuges without number. Once more, to prove the God whom you adore to be living and personal, show the fact of His works and of His intervention.

Such as we have described it, impious philosophy is not content with having professors' chairs and journals; it is organized, and it covers Europe with its secret societies. It gradually initiates its adepts into the practice of these systems, into the social struggle that it carries on by all means, in case of necessity, even by the poniard and by infernal machines. In the Masonic initiation, the simple behold only a ridiculous ceremony, and in their reunions only noisy banquets. At length they find themselves entangled in a conspiracy against all legitimate authority. At the present time, especially wherever the Masonic lodges have gained a foothold, they have suffered their mysteries to be known sufficiently to open the eyes of every man of good faith to their impious and revolutionary intrigues. Thus are justified at the same time, the condemnations pronounced against secret societies by Leo XII., Pius VIII., Gregory XVI. and Pius IX.

CHAPTER XXI.

PRESENT STATE OF THE CHURCH.

After eighteen centuries of warfare against powerful enemies from within and without, against violence, barbarism, intrigue, and corruption, the Catholic Church exists in all the vigor of youth. Humanly speaking, she must have perished; and how many times, in our days especially, has not human wisdom predicted her last hour! But what the impious take for weakness, is the virtue of the cross, the true strength of the Church. She may suffer, she must struggle, but no power can prevail against her: *Impugnari potest, expugnari non potest,* says St. Augustine. Her fortress may be assaulted, but it cannot be taken. All hostile attacks end only in showing that the Church is built upon an immovable rock and that a higher protection watches over her destinies. "The Church," says St. Hilary of Poitiers, "has that particular property, that her authority triumphs when it is violated, that her power is manifested when it is outraged, and is consolidated when it is abandoned."

From this high position the Church looks down upon the vast ruins of human institutions. She has witnessed the successive downfall of sects apparently the most durable: she alone maintains and strengthens herself even by the attacks which she is obliged

to sustain. According as we advance from her first beginning, we see established by the facts themselves, and with an increasing certainty, the *indefectibility* which was promised to her by Jesus Christ.

The perpetuity of the Catholic Church is not merely the exterior fact of a society always united in the name of one and the same principle; the interior fact has an entirely different bearing. The Church is to-day the same as she was in the first age of her existence. She possesses the same faith, confers the same sacraments, has the same worship, and is governed by the same constitution; in a word, she retains without change, without abatement, all that her divine Founder conferred upon her. Here is a fact unparalleled in the annals of the world. Set aside the proofs by which we established the divine origin of the Church, consider only that unity of doctrine among so many learned men of all times and all countries, notwithstanding so many contrary influences, recall to mind the instability of all purely human institutions of this nature, consider that while requiring this unity, the Church has not ceased to impart instruction, to invite examination of the foundations upon which faith rests, to stimulate for that purpose the study of languages and historical monuments, and you will say with Bossuet that the perpetuity of the Church is an ever-existing miracle. Heretics have been convinced of this and are unable to deny the fact or its consequences.[1]

[1] "It is impossible," said Wolster, a Protestant, "to deny in the preservation of the Catholic Church, in spite of all the infernal powers, a miracle of Divine Providence." Many others have made similar admissions.

The most enlightened among them have begun with new care to examine the monuments of the first ages of the Church. Now, what is the result of their researches, particularly of the Anglicans of Oxford? A return to the dogmas and practices of the Roman Church. An astonishing fact and yet but little noticed: these are enemies of the Roman Church, men who continue for the most part to reject the pontifical authority, but learned men who by conscientious study have been led in spite of their prejudices to render to the true Church, the most precious homage, and involuntarily to become her most unanswerable apologists. They are without doubt inconsistent in persevering after that in their schism, but their inconsistency adds to the force of their testimony. This is proved to them every day by those among them who have had the courage to re-enter the pale of the Catholic Church. They turn against their old co-religionists the forcible arguments which they formerly enforced in unison. "You adopt," they say to them, "the Catholic belief upon the Eucharist, because this belief is evidently that of the Fathers of the first centuries; how can you reject the supremacy of the Pope which is supported by testimonies not less imposing, and still more numerous?"[1]

[1] Cardinal Newman develops this thought and arrays the testimony in his *History of the Development of Christian Doctrine.* He was one of the ablest of the Anglican divines, and was compelled by his historical researches and the irresistible force of these arguments to return to the bosom of that Church from which his ancestors had seceded three centuries before.

Ever living, ever the same, the Church in our days appears in certain respects more beautiful and stronger than ever. If at no other period has the pontifical authority been more bitterly attacked by men of perdition, never also has the voice of the common Father of the faithful been listened to with more veneration and submission. Everywhere else, in human as well as in divine things, the principle of authority has sustained the severest shocks, while the Catholic Church alone offers us the imposing spectacle of a pious unanimity under the sovereign authority of the successors of St. Peter.

Strong in her union, the Church has revived with fresh zeal all the institutions of her glorious apostolate, and particularly the work of distant missions which the troubles of the last century had obliged her to interrupt. Who is ignorant of the results of the modern Association for the Propagation of the Faith? Read its annals: the glad tidings are heard in the wilds of America and in the isles of Oceanica, in the center of Islamism and of Asiatic idolatry. There, as in the first age of the Church, the blood of martyrs is the seed of new Christians. Everywhere charity supplements the work of preaching, and God seems to delight in seconding the zeal of apostolic men by opening to them by progress and industry, and by new discoveries countries hitherto inaccessible. By the side of this picture we can place that of the Protestant missions. It is sufficient to say that the work of the Bible societies, notwithstanding the immense resources at their dis-

posal, is struck with a complete sterility; on this point we have the admissions and complaints of the self-styled ministers of the pure gospel. Convinced of their feebleness, they are content, like the heretics of the first centuries, with some easy conquests among the most vicious and ignorant Catholics. While they are thus recruited, often by the payment of money, their members most distinguished for knowledge and virtue, hasten by their return to rejoice the Holy Catholic Church.[1]

By the features which we have just sketched it is easy for every sincere man to recognize the true Church of Jesus Christ. The Roman Catholic Church is really the shining beacon which, from the summit of the mountain upon which God placed it, illumines the whole globe. Alone, in the midst of the ruins of the structures raised against her, she retains all the solidity of an indestructible edifice. Either the work of Jesus Christ has perished, and all religion is vain, or the Catholic Church is the holy anchor of salvation. This explains the eagerness of some to be received into her fold, and the bitterness of others in attacking her. Against her alone is leagued all the hatred of impiety. To whatever degree they are removed from her, Protestants, Anglicans, Deists, Pantheists, all are united in the

[1] Protestants perceive and lament this fact. "The passage from the Catholic Church to a sect," says Fitzwilliam, "is too often by the way of vices; the passage from a sect to the Church is always by the way of virtues." According to Dean Swift, "When the Pope weeds his garden, he throws the weeds over to the Protestants."

same sentiment of hostility toward the Catholic Church. Even the governments unite with her enemies, yet they implore her support in the days of crisis and revolution. As to the men of disorder, the promoters of social revolutions, they have sworn against Rome the oath of Annibal; and far from having a grudge against Protestantism they request its assistance:[1] they know very well that if they triumph over Rome, no sect will offer them a serious resistance. "When everything yields," says Cormenin, "when everything is corrupt, the clergy (Catholic) alone remain independent, because the Church alone gives independence; the Church alone produces strong minds who are able to resist." In fact, ready to grant concessions upon everything else (as the French and Spanish concordats have shown), the Catholic Church does not recoil from the defence of the revealed truth, — the truth that saves souls, upholds states and the whole social order.

We conclude with Bossuet: "What consolation for the children of God! What certainty of the truth when they see that from Innocent XI. (from Leo XIII., for us), who now fills so worthily the first See of the Church we go back without interruption to St. Peter who was appointed by Jesus Christ prince of the Apostles: whence taking up the line

[1] Eugene Sue and Edgar Quinet consider Unitarianism as a step toward irreligion and infidelity, and they give counsels accordingly. Friends or enemies, all comprehend that society every day tends to divide itself into two hostile camps; socialistic rationalism on the one side, and Catholic authority on the other.

of Pontiffs who served under the old law we go back to Aaron and Moses: thence to the Patriarchs and to the beginning of the world! What a succession, what a tradition, what a wonderful chain! If our minds naturally uncertain, and which have become by their uncertainties the sport of their own reasonings, need, in the questions relating to salvation, to be fixed and determined by some certain authority, what greater is there than that of the Catholic Church, which unites in herself all the authority of past ages and the ancient traditions of the human race back to its first beginning."

"Thus the society which Jesus Christ who was expected during all the past centuries founded on a *Rock*, and over which he placed St. Peter and his successors, justifies itself by its own continuation, and bears in its eternal duration the impress of the hand of God.

"Four or five authentic facts which are clearer than the light of day, prove that our Religion is as old as the world. Consequently they prove that it has no other author than Him who created the universe, who holding all things in His hand, was alone able both to commence and direct a design which embraces all centuries." [1]

"Holy Roman Church, mother of Churches, and mother of all the faithful, the Church chosen by God to unite all His children in the same faith and in the same charity, we shall ever adhere to thy unity

[1] *Hist. Univ.* II. P.

with all the yearnings of our heart. If I forget thee, Roman Church, may I forget myself; may my tongue be withered and cleave to my mouth, if thou art not always the first in my remembrance, if I do not place thee at the beginning of all my canticles of joy." [1]

[1] *Serm. sur l'Unité.*

THE END.

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